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ABSTRACT

This handbook provides basic information about working with Indochinese refugees - who they are, how they come to the United States, and how they can best be assisted in starting their new life in the United States. The first part of the book describes what it means to be a refugee. The second part contains an English version of "Your New Life in the United States," an orientation handbook available in Vietnamese, Lao, Hmong, Khmer, and Cantonese Chinese for newly-arrived refugees. This handbook covers many aspects of American life that are new to most refugees: (1) travel and communication, (2) employment, (3) education, (4) housing, (5) community services, (6) medical care, (7) finances and consumer education, and (8) law. This version of the handbook contains additional information at the beginning of each section to assist those working with refugees. Background notes are included concerning differences between what the refugees may be accustomed to and what they face in the United States. At the end of the book there is a checklist, outlining in appropriate chronological order some of the steps to take to prepare for and work with refugees. (NCR)

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A Guide for Helping Refugees Adjust to

Their ~~YOUR~~ NEW LIFE IN THE UNITED STATES

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FOREWORD

This handbook has been written to give you some basic information about working with Indochinese refugees — who they are, how they come to the United States, and how you can best assist them in starting their new life in this country.

The first part of this book describes what it means to be a refugee. The second part contains an English version of Your New Life in the United States, an orientation handbook that is being distributed to newly-arrived refugees. This handbook covers many aspects of American life that are new to most refugees. It is divided into nine sections:

- Introduction
- Travel and Communication
- Employment
- Education
- Housing
- Community Services
- Medical Care
- Finances and Consumer Education
- Law

The handbook has been adapted into Chinese, Hmong, Khmer (Cambodian), Lao and Vietnamese. While the basic information is the same, each version has been written in such a way as to be culturally appropriate and understandable to speakers of the language.

Your edition of the refugee handbook contains additional information at the beginning of each section to assist you in working with the refugees. This information includes some background notes concerning differences between what the refugees may be accustomed to and what they face in the U.S. There are also some suggestions about how to best help orient the refugees in specific areas.

At the end of the book there is a checklist, outlining in approximate chronological order some of the steps you can take to prepare for and work with refugees.

Additionally, LORC has published a companion volume, The Peoples and Cultures of Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam, to aquaint you with the backgrounds and customs of the refugees you are assisting.

The refugees' handbook is part of a packet that also contains a phrasebook (in the refugees' own language and English), and audio-cassette in their own language to further explain the handbook, and an emergency card. You can help the refugee fill out the card with the names and telephone numbers indicated. You can also provide access to a cassette tape player. This is especially important for those refugees who are illiterate or who read poorly.

No single book can contain all that you will need to know about refugees and resettlement. Each individual's needs are different, and circumstances differ in various parts of the country. It is therefore important that you use materials from a variety of sources and turn to people who have already been through such experiences for advice and assistance. We hope that refugees, sponsors and service providers will work together using these materials. You have much to teach the refugees, but they can teach you much as well.

If you need further information or assistance, you may call the staff of the Language and Orientation Resource Center; usually someone who speaks both the refugees' language and English will be available to help you.

Language and Orientation Resource Center
3520 Prospect Street, NW
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PART 1

THE REFUGEES FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA

Based on an international definition of refugee formulated by the United Nations, the Refugee Act of 1980 describes a refugee as "a person who is outside his/her country of nationality (or habitual residence) who is unable or unwilling to return to that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion."

Since April 1975, political turmoil in Southeast Asia has provoked the migration of people across national boundaries to find refuge from various forms of persecution and aggression. In 1975 the United States admitted 130,000 refugees from Southeast Asia. By the end of December 1980, nearly 500,000 refugees from Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam had been resettled throughout the United States.

The term "Indochinese refugee" has been used extensively and undifferentially to describe all Vietnamese, Lao and Cambodians who fled their homelands to seek asylum in other countries. While this term may be convenient, it is misleading, implying a common political or cultural background. "Indochinese" refugees include a wide range of people from several different ethnic groups — from the habitants of remote mountain villages to those of sophisticated urban set-

"Indochinese" refugees include a wide range of people from different ethnic groups—from the habitants of remote mountain villages to those of sophisticated urban settings.

tings. In some instances, their traditional family life has been altered or destroyed. While complete families of refugees are being resettled in the United States, there are also unaccompanied minors, families in which the parents have been lost or killed and an older

brother or sister is the head of the household, elderly individuals, single parents, and widows and widowers without their children.

These refugees have experienced various degrees of tragic and traumatic conditions during their escape. Tens of thousands lost their lives on the South China Sea, along the Mekong River, or in the jungles of Cambodia and Laos. Among the survivors, many were robbed and raped by pirates at sea or at the border of the countries of first refuge. Many of those who tried to escape through the forests were killed or injured by land mines and gunfire.

The refugees' problems do not end when they reach the country of first asylum, the nation in which they live while awaiting admission to the United States or another country for permanent resettlement. Typically, the refugees must wait months or even years before they leave these camps. The months spent in the camps are frustrating and anxiety-producing. While basic sanitation and other facilities are provided conditions are crowded and uncomfortable. Opportunities to prepare for life in the other countries have been limited. Presently, some adult refugees who have been accepted for resettlement in the United States attend a 12-week intensive English language and cultural orientation program, however.

Nevertheless, the refugees may feel disoriented, insecure and anxious upon their arrival in the face of their tremendous loss of family, friends and homeland. In spite of all this, the refugees from Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam have generally been recognized as adaptable and willing to work hard to become self-sustaining and contributing members of their new society.

FACING A NEW CULTURE

Many of the refugees coming to the United States are familiar with some things they may have learned from friends or relatives, American movies, or contact with Americans in their home countries. Some may know nothing more than that the U.S. is a big country. As a result, refugees often arrive in the United States uncertain of what to expect. They may have received little or no information about the roles of American voluntary or social service agencies. Worse, the information they do have may be grossly inaccurate; they may have been told, for example, that their sponsor would buy them a car. It is therefore important that you be explicit in helping them understand what can and cannot be done.

In coming to the United States, the refugees need to get used to more than the aspects of this culture that are easily identified — food, clothing, getting around, finding a job. They need to learn to deal with people who think and see the world in a way that is very different from that to which they are accustomed.

It is natural for people who have grown up in one culture to think or feel that their's is the right or the usual way of doing things. Nevertheless, culture is something that we learn, not an inborn trait. In a culture people not only learn habits of behavior, they also learn "habits of thinking." Beliefs, values and a person's way of viewing the world are culturally determined.

When a person faces a new culture for the first time, it is necessary then not only to be familiar with cus-

toms and appropriate behavior, but also the values and thinking which underlie these customs as well. When you have to think about ways of doing things that in your culture you do instinctively, this creates a stressful and trying situation — "culture shock."

This "culture shock" is faced not only by refugees coming into the country, but by Americans as well. for example, while refugees have to learn to adjust to the American notion of punctuality and scheduling, Americans may have to initially cope with appointments not being kept and refugees showing up at inappropriate times, because they do not have the American concept of time, which is cut into chunks (hours) and ordered in a systematic way.

Individually, Americans and refugees differ greatly in the way that they are affected by culture shock. Some may react with annoyance and frustration, others with feelings of isolation, despair, rootlessness, and even depression. Additionally, refugees face the problem of establishing positive feelings of self-esteem in a new cultural situation with which they may have no familiarity.

Adjusting to a New Culture

The ease with which people are able to adjust to a new way of living depends on a number of factors, including age, language ability, similarity of certain ideas and customs between their own cultures and their new one, and emotional states resulting from various degrees of traumatic experiences. Adjusting to the new culture demands a reordering of daily behavior in subtle ways. In the adjustment process, a person usually goes through several stages. Initially, a person may be excited about encountering a new culture. After many hours of traveling which follow months of waiting in camps, refugees normally experience a sense of euphoria upon arrival in the United States. As refugees start to acquire language and culture skills in their new home, and as Americans working with them become familiar with the cultural background and customs of the refugees, the stress and conflict may be somewhat lessened.

In a given culture, people not only learn habits of behavior, they also learn habits of thinking.

The final phase of successful adjustment is reached when the refugees have adapted to living in the United States, but have managed to maintain their native values and beliefs. Likewise for Americans, these refugees' traditional values and beliefs can be accepted and seen as valid ways of viewing and participating in daily life.

Perhaps the greatest impact of cultural adjustment on the part of everyone is learning about and confronting their own cultures. Patience, understanding and a good sense of humor are as important as realistic expectations in facing a new culture.

PART II

HOW YOU CAN HELP

As a sponsor or the refugees' primary American contact, you may be the single most important part of their resettlement—as well as their most important source of emotional support outside of their own families — for many months. Your relationship will be vital in determining the refugees' eventual adjustment to life in America.

Refugees have many conflicting needs that require sensitivity and flexibility on your part. For example, they need time to rest and become accustomed to their new surroundings, yet they must also soon start enrolling their children in schools, finding their own house or apartment, finding jobs, and so on.

The circumstances faced by the new arrivals force them into considerable dependence on Americans, e.g., sponsors, teachers, resettlement workers, etc. During the initial period, you may be needed at any time of the day or night to act as interpreter, problem solver, counselor or advisor. Yet your overriding goal is to help them become independent of you — to become self-sufficient, contributing members of society — as soon as possible. Helping the refugees attain self-sufficiency is important not only for economic reasons, but also to establish a sense of self-worth and involvement in their new community.

Finally, you may want to "be there," even after the refugee family is relatively settled. They may still need you as a friend and a source of emotional support; this responsibility can be a long-lasting and very rewarding one.

Almost without exception, the refugees will be grateful for all you are doing for them. They may not always express their gratitude verbally, but refugees often say that they will never forget what others have done for them. You are performing a valuable service — one that is truly appreciated not only by refugees, but by everyone involved in resettlement in the United States.

WORKING WITH REFUGEES

The refugee orientation handbook that follows will give you some idea of what it means to be a refugee. By indicating the many areas that are new to most refugees — transportation, health services, and the American educational system, for example — the book will help you understand some of the many adjustments that a refugee needs to know to start to function as a member of American society.

While all refugees are different, there are nevertheless some general considerations to keep in mind when you are assisting in their resettlement here:

- There are great differences in how people from various parts of the world, or even from the same culture, learn. Some learn best by being given explanations, some learn best by seeing and doing, and so on.
- The level of literacy of the refugees varies greatly. Some can read in their own language and use a Latin alphabet like English; some can read in their own language and use a non-Latin alphabet; some may not read in any language or even understand the concept of reading or the abstract representation of objects in the real world, such as pictures.
- For many things, such as the use of appliances, it is usually most effective to demonstrate the activity and then have the refugee do it. Don't leave out steps: if you show the refugee how to turn the oven on, be sure to show how to turn it off. Don't assume they will automatically know.
- Avoid asking the refugees if they understand something. As a matter of politeness they will almost always say "yes." In fact, this is more an acknowledgement of your efforts, thanking you for the demonstration or information. You can't be sure that it means they understood it. Instead, for example, ask questions for which they have to tell you how to do what you've just shown or told them, or ask them to demonstrate that they know and understand something.
- While the refugee has a great deal to learn, the most important area is that which involves safety. This handbook devotes considerable attention to this. It is suggested that you focus your first efforts towards helping the refugee understand basic safety precautions together with those things necessary for "survival."

Your overriding goal is to help them become independent of you—to become self-sufficient, contributing members of society—as soon as possible.

- Seek the assistance of a bilingual person to help in explaining or demonstrating. If you do so, however, remember to talk to the refugees when you are speaking and not to the interpreter. Even if the refugee may not understand English, much information is conveyed non-verbally. It is also easier to learn to understand a language if a person is addressing you directly, rather than just talking through a third person.
- There are bound to be some communication problems between you and the refugees — for example, at

times when an interpreter is not available. Don't hesitate to use any method of communication (hand signals, facial expressions) available to you.

- Remember that not everything the refugee needs to know is in this book, or any book. As an American, you are probably the most important source of orientation information, since you know how to live and get about in the United States, and have had a lot of practice doing it. Use your own judgment and knowledge about refugees and your area of the country to supplement and modify the information presented here, to most effectively assist the refugees in adapting to life in this country.

Don't leave out any steps: if you show the refugee how to turn the oven on, be sure to show how to turn it off. Don't assume they will automatically know.

- TAKE YOUR TIME! The refugees will arrive in this country physically and emotionally exhausted. They will need some time to rest. Start slowly and try to resist the natural urge to show and tell about everything this country has to offer at once. You will soon learn how much the refugee can take in at a time and you will be able to adjust your efforts accordingly. The refugees have a great deal to learn about life in the United States, but they don't have to learn it all the first week they are here.

- Follow up on what you show and tell the refugees. When there is so much to learn, there is a tendency to sometimes forget certain things, especially in the beginning when everything is very new and very strange. An occasional reminder or repeat demonstration sometimes helps.
- Use as many different resources as are available in your community, and don't hesitate to seek advice or suggestions from other refugees and other people who have been sponsors or worked with refugees.
- Don't panic. Keep in mind that most problems can be worked out eventually, especially with the help of others. One misunderstanding will not dictate the ultimate success or failure of the resettlement effort.

Following is an English version of the refugee orientation handbook, Your New Life in The United States, to be provided to the refugees in their own languages. At the beginning of each section are "Background Notes" so that you can make the best use of the information contained in this guide. The topics covered in these notes match those in the handbook.

YOUR NEW LIFE
IN THE UNITED STATES

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FOREWORD

Welcome to the United States. As a refugee who has recently arrived in this country, you probably have a number of questions about your new life here: about the people you will meet, the responsibilities you will have, and the kinds of help you will receive. This book was written to help you find answers to some of these questions, especially in your first few months of resettlement. The topics are discussed in nine sections:

- Introduction
- Travel and Communication
- Your job
- Education
- Your Home
- Community Services
- Medical Care
- Finances and Consumer Education
- Law

At the end of each section, you will find a Checklist. You should use that to help you decide what you should know and do during your first few months here. If you or a member of your family has difficulty reading this handbook, there is an audio-cassette tape which is included with the book. This tape provides a brief summary of each section in the handbook and helps you to find ways of getting more information. The summary uses the pictures in the book as its guide; if there is someone who can read the book, that person can help the other to get more information from the page.

The handbook was prepared by a team of Indochinese and American information specialists who understand the problems and processes of resettlement. This team talked to many refugees and sponsors, looked at the materials which had already been produced by local programs and national organizations, and from these, developed an outline of what was most important for refugees to understand in their first months in the United States. The handbook is available in Chinese, Hmong, Khmer, Lao and Vietnamese. An English version is also available as part of the **Sponsor Handbook.** Although each handbook discusses the same subjects, it does not do so in exactly the same manner or in the same detail. Thus, if you are reading the Vietnamese version of the handbook, you will have the information presented to help you adjust from Vietnam to the United States. If you are reading the Hmong version, you are reading what Hmong refugees and their sponsors and social service providers felt was most important in making the transition to your life in this country.

Naturally, no book can answer all questions. This book was not intended to do so. Rather, it provides a starting point and will lead you to other sources of information. You should become familiar with the book's contents, but should also talk with your friends and your sponsor, as well as others in your community, to get more information and a better understanding of the ways people do things in this country. There will be lots of questions you need answered; there will also be many people who can help provide you with answers.

We have compiled the information in this book to be used throughout the United States. However, as you will notice in reading the book, there are many differences in the ways that people do things and the kinds of services that are available across the country. You will need to find out the special resources or services that are available in your community or area. Your sponsor, a Mutual Assistance Association, a friend, or a community service provider are people who can help you untangle some of the complexities of your new life.

Although the handbook was written for adults—principally for the head of the household or family elder—it answers questions which are important to others in your family as well.

The production of this book involved large numbers of people who cared deeply about the project and provided their time and comments to make the Handbook as helpful as possible. There are too many to thank them all here.

Many Asian teachers have always exhorted the three age-old rules of learning:

learn-question		learn-ask
learn-exercise	OR	learn-try
learn-application		learn-apply

we can suggest no better way to use this handbook. We expect heads of families, sponsors, and service providers to work together in using this handbook. They have much to teach you, but remember you have to teach them as well.

If you need further information or assistance, you may call the staff of the Orientation Resource Center; usually someone who speaks your language will be able to help you.

Orientation Resource Center
Center for Applied Linguistics
3520 Prospect St., NW
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INTRODUCTION

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BACKGROUND NOTES

Community Relations. Refugees will occasionally experience prejudice from a variety of people. This cannot be avoided, but you can discuss such experiences with the refugees to help them understand and keep the problems in perspective. (p. 6)*

Greetings. While American customs are usually informal—calling each other by first names, for example—the refugees will probably be uncomfortable with this at first. They are accustomed to the more polite, formal patterns of relationships found in their homeland. It will take some time for them to adjust to what they see at first as being the over-familiarity of Americans, just as it may take some time for you to become comfortable with their formality. (p. 9)

Names. There is considerable variety in the structure of names in the various homelands of the refugees. You can use the information in this book and in the companion book, The Peoples and Cultures of Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam, to guide you in addressing people appropriately. Tell them how you would like to be addressed and ask what they would like to be called. They will be uncertain of how to address Americans and the proper use of titles such as "Mister." (p. 10)

Time. In an industrialized, fast-paced society such as that in the United States, time serves an extremely important role in structuring our lives. Refugees, however, are usually accustomed to broader concepts of time: growing seasons instead of months, mornings instead of hours. They will therefore need help to understand how important schedules are to Americans, particularly how we value punctuality. When you have made an appointment for the refugees, it may help to remind them in advance and encourage them to be ready. (p.10)

Families. The value Americans place on the family is very different from that of most refugees. Focusing on the individual, the American may see the family as supporting the member, i.e., "the family raises the child." The refugee, however, is more likely to view the individual as being subordinate to the family. The refugees will probably get their first taste of American family life by observing you and the other families they meet. (p. 12)

U.S. Government. The separation of powers—federal, state and local governments, for example—that Americans take for granted is a new concept to refugees. The totalitarian governments they have fled are very different from the more representative government they find here. They will need help understanding the different functions of governments and the fact that laws differ in various states and localities. (p. 13)

*Page numbers refer to those pages in the refugee handbook where these subjects are discussed.

RESETTLEMENT

In the United States, the resettlement process is largely handled by voluntary agencies, known as Volags. These agencies have signed contracts with the U.S. government, making them responsible for initial refugee resettlement.

They are private non-profit groups, many of which have religious affiliations. The states of Iowa and Idaho are also responsible for direct resettlement.

Volags help in migration planning and services; they also help to reunify refugees in the U.S. with family in camps or in native lands. These voluntary agencies have offices in local communities responsible for contracting refugees and providing these services directly to them. There is a great variety in policies and practices of different Volags in one community or even among the local agencies within the same national network. Ways of providing services as well as advice on public assistance — financial, food and medical — may vary from office to office. Some offices may give you some money upon arriving in the U.S.; other offices may give little or no money, but provide other services. It is therefore very important that you should keep in touch with your local Volag and to have a clear understanding of the assistance it may provide. (For further information, please see Chapter 5: Community Services in the United States.)

YOUR SPONSOR

Your sponsor is a person (or organization) who has offered time and resources to get you started in your new life in the U.S. Many Americans feel privileged to be sponsors of refugees from many parts of the world. The spirit of helping others has long been a characteristic of the American people. Most sponsors are well-intentioned. Though they may not be familiar with your culture, they are eager to help and will be of assistance to you.

Sponsors will provide food and shelter during your initial period of life in the U.S. They may assist you in finding a job, enrolling your children in school, learning how to shop, meeting others in your community, using local transportation and so on. They may arrange for others to help, too. After this initial help, though, you will be expected to learn to do these things for yourself and become self-sufficient.

While sponsorship carries a moral obligation, it is not legally binding. The kind of sponsorship and its length will vary from person to person, from agency to agency. Some people and some organizations have more time and more resources than others. Also, the number of refugees in a particular area will affect the availability of sponsors and resources.

YOUR NEW LIFE IN THE UNITED STATES

Adjusting to a new culture is difficult at first. In the adjustment process, a person usually goes through several stages. Initially, you may be excited about your new life in the U.S. Following months of waiting in camps, you may experience a sense of euphoria as you depart for the United States. Likewise, sponsors are happy that the refugees they are sponsoring have finally arrived. However, elation on the part of both the refugee and sponsors may not last due to the many difficulties, both logistic and cultural, that must be faced by both. This is the period of the greatest stress or "culture shock." Sponsors may also find it difficult at first to adjust to the refugees' culture, just as refugees find it difficult to adjust to their sponsors' culture.

It is important to remember that everyone who moves from one place to another — especially to a different country — experiences this culture shock, although people may differ in the way they are affected by it. Some may react with annoyance and frustration; others with feelings of isolation, despair, rootlessness, and even depression so severe that it interferes with their day-to-day living.

As a refugee, you face the additional problem of establishing feelings of self-esteem in a cultural situation with which you may not be familiar. As you start to acquire language and culture skills in your new home, and as sponsors become familiar with your cultural background and customs, the stress may be somewhat lessened. The final phase of successful adjustment is reached when you have adapted to living in the United States, while managing to maintain your native values and beliefs.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

The U.S. is a nation of refugees and immigrants. The only "native" Americans are the Indians who lived on this continent long before the first Europeans arrived. Though the U.S. has been called a "melting pot," the many groups of people who have come here have kept much of their native traditions, languages and customs. Such variety makes American culture rich and interesting. In a large city you can hear Chinese, Korean, Spanish, and other languages being spoken; you can eat in a Jewish deli, shop in Chinatown and go to a French movie. The American ability to accept new things is due in part to the presence of so many groups.

For many, belonging to a community is an important part of American life. This community may center around ethnic groups, church groups, or special interests. However, there have always been tensions with newcomers in the United States. When large groups of immigrants — or refugees — move into a community, be it a state, city, town, or local neighborhood, tensions may develop. These tensions may come about from a variety of reasons:

- race or national origin
- economic status
- religious beliefs
- lifestyle
- political beliefs

In some communities, tensions develop because one group may fear that the new group will increase the competition for available housing or employment. Others may be threatened or strongly offended by political or religious beliefs that they do not share. Single people who live in a particular apartment building may be angered by the presence of large families with children who may be perceived as noisy, disorderly, or out of place.

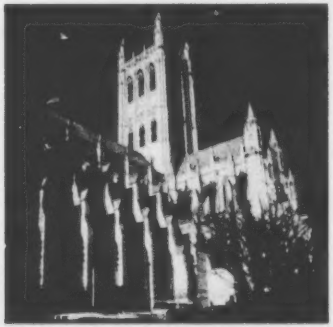
The inability to understand a foreign language or a different way of doing things may cause communication breakdowns between Americans and newly-arrived members of a community. These breakdowns may result in tensions, resentment or even overt hostility. Such tensions occur among Americans, too, and it is important to realize that you are not necessarily at fault. If a problem does occur, do not hesitate to seek help from a local mutual assistance association (MAA), voluntary agency or police department.

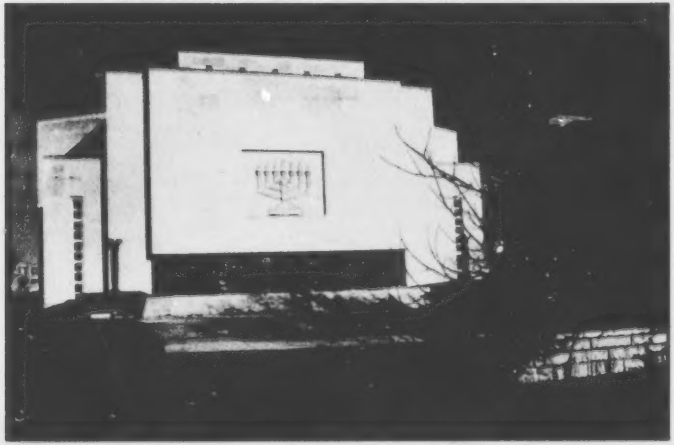
RELIGIOUS LIFE

Freedom of religion is a fundamental part of American life. There is no official "American Church," and people are free to follow their own beliefs. In the United States, you will see many kinds of churches and temples, such as Christian, Jewish, and Moslem.

In many areas where there is a large refugee population, there may be temples or churches with native priests or monks. During important holidays, members of religious groups and mutual assistance associations gather at these temples and churches to celebrate and participate in community activities. Also, religious groups, and the MAAs associated with them, can play a very important role in easing your resettlement. Often such groups may provide food, clothing and services, or will be able to put

There are many kinds of churches in the U.S.





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you in contact with other community resources and services.

Generally the most convenient place to practice your faith and traditions will be in your home with your family. If larger ceremonies are necessary, community centers or schools can sometimes provide a room or auditorium. These ceremonies will be unfamiliar to most Americans. Some that you may have practiced in your own country may be against the law in the U.S. for reasons of health, sanitation or safety. For example, it is generally not permitted to light incense or candles in a hospital. In most states, funerals must be held in funeral homes or mortuaries.

Situations may occur in which you are asked to participate in the religious activities of your American friends or sponsors. While you may find it interesting to learn about different religions, you are under no obligation at all to participate in these services. A polite but firm "no, thank you" will permit you to decline such invitations.

AMERICAN CUSTOMS AND BEHAVIOR

Interacting with Americans will be difficult at the beginning. It is only natural for people who have grown up in one culture to think or feel that their way of doing things in that culture is the right or only way. When you face American culture for the first time, you should try to become familiar with its customs and behavior.

Americans are generally friendly and outgoing. They prefer informality, and believe it to be a sign of friendliness. This is evidenced largely in greeting customs and use of first names.

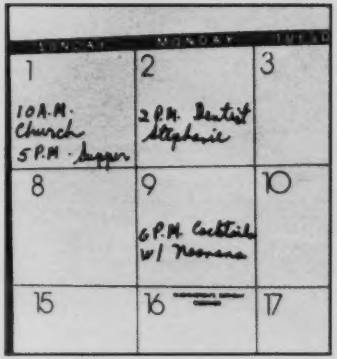
Greetings

Americans are quite informal in their greetings except when meeting someone for the first time or in rather formal situations. Americans never bow to each other; when meeting someone, they usually shake each other's hands. Americans seldom employ titles in social situations. A doctor will introduce him or herself without a title, though he/she will probably use it if you see him/her professionally. During an introduction, a person may say "How do you do?" or "I'm pleased to meet you." After this initial encounter, however, Americans shift to a more informal greeting such as "How are you?" or "How are you doing?" A friendly smile and "Hello" is all that is needed as a response.

Names

Many Americans also use informal, shorter names instead of their formal first names. For example, someone named Samuel Johnson may be called Sam by his friends. Likewise, Richard Brown may ask you to call him Dick; Barbara Stein may want to be called Barb.

The family name comes second in the U.S. "John Smith's" family name is Smith. In formal situations, or when you meet someone for the first time, you would want to call him "Mr. Smith." Often, even people you do not know very well may want to call you by your first name — this is the informal American custom. Americans think it is friendlier and more relaxed to use the first name.



Time

Americans divide their days into several blocks of time, and plan different activities for different times. American time is "on the dot." If something is supposed to happen at eight o'clock, it will begin at eight. Americans value promptness and may become angry if a person is more than 15 minutes late without a good reason. If you know you are going to be late, call in advance and let someone know. If you arrive late, you should apologize and explain why. Americans arrive on time for doctors' appointments. The doctor may keep you waiting, but if you keep the doctor waiting, you may get a bill for the doctor's time!

Gestures

Gestures (using the hands or other parts of your body to communicate a meaning) are cultural. What is polite in one country may be rude in another. For example, Americans often call people by moving the index finger towards themselves. Many Americans not only communicate with gestures, but with touch as well. Often they put a supportive hand on a person's shoulder or an arm around him or her to express warm feelings toward the individual. Sometimes an American will take your arm to guide you when crossing a street. If you feel bad about being touched in this way, you may draw away politely and discreetly without hurting another person's feelings.

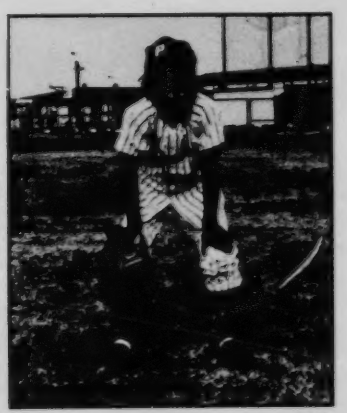
Americans often embrace when meeting friends. It is important that you not imitate these gestures unless you clearly understand the context and the appropriateness of your actions. Physical ways in which affection is expressed in your own culture may be seen by Americans as inappropriate. For example, it is generally unacceptable for adults of the same sex to hold hands in public.

Although Americans gesture a lot, three gestures that are generally considered rude are: pointing your finger at someone, snapping your fingers to get a person's attention, and staring at someone.

Leisure Activities

Americans schedule their leisure time as well as work time. Weekends are often devoted to watching TV, playing sports, working in the garden, fixing up the house, going to the movies, or cooking. If you want to visit people during their leisure time, you should call them in advance and check to see if the time is appropriate.

Now that you are in the United States, you may want to swim or play other sports. In most towns and cities there are many free parks where people and their families go to take walks or have picnics. (Hunting and fishing are not usually allowed in parks.)



AMERICAN FAMILIES

The nuclear family — father, mother and children — is the basic unit of American family structure. Today, the average family has two or three children. Children who reach their twenty-first birthday and married adults usually live away from their parents. Sometimes members of families see each other once a year or less, usually for holidays, weddings, funerals, and so on.

Older people usually live apart from their children, although a grandparent may occasionally live with a daughter or son. Some live in retirement homes or special apartment buildings for senior citizens, where they live with others their own age and engage in special activities. Clubs, churches and other groups also often provide them with opportunities for social activities.

THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

The U.S. Capitol Building in Washington, D.C.

The Constitution of the U.S. gives Americans many freedoms and rights. The government that is designed to protect these rights is complex, however. Unlike the system to which you may be accustomed, not all aspects of the government are centralized, and not all officials are appointed. In general American government has three levels: local, state and federal. Each level has specific functions and officials who are elected by American citizens to terms of stated years. Any citizen in good standing over the age of 18 may vote.

Local Governments

Generally, local governments manage everyday matters, such as garbage collection, water and sewer service, maintenance of police and fire departments, and libraries. Most towns have their own governments, led by a chief official called a mayor. In addition, there is a county government which deals with legal matters such as registration of voters and issuing of marriage licenses. (A county is a smaller area within a state, and may include several towns or cities.)

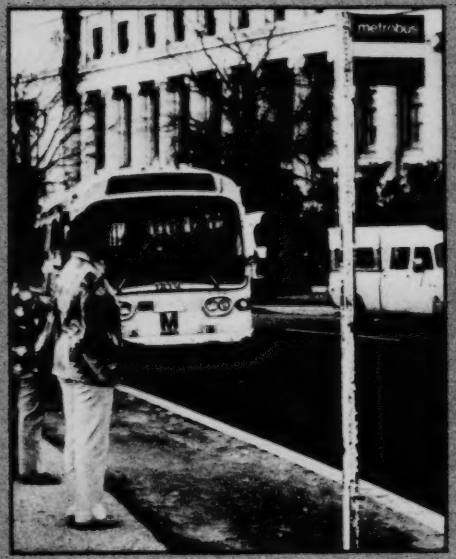
State Governments

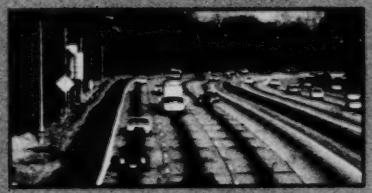
Each of the 50 states has an elected governor, a legislature to make laws and many departments. State governments regulate sales and other taxes, and manage services that are essential to residents of the state: road maintenance, issuing of drivers' licenses, health and safety inspections of restaurants and businesses, etc.

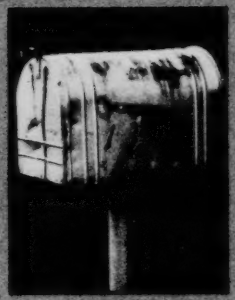
Federal Government

The federal government in Washington, D.C. has three major divisions: the executive, the judicial and the legislative branches. The executive branch consists of the President and his advisors and assistants. Their duties are to carry out the mandates of the Constitution and the legislation of Congress. The Judicial branch consists of a nine-member Supreme Court named by the President. It is the highest legal authority in the U.S. The legislative (law-making) branch is the Congress (which has two parts), the House and the Senate.

TRAVEL & COMMUNICATION
IN THE UNITED STATES







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BACKGROUND NOTES

To new refugees in the United States, the country is at once very large and very small. The physical size of the U.S. may be overwhelming to some, who cannot understand why it is difficult to visit a friend or relative who is only a few states away. On the other hand, the ease with which Americans can travel across town or telephone across the country may be equally surprising. Most refugees need help in learning how to use the communication and transportation facilities that will be available to them—as well as learning what may not be presently available to them because of expense, such as air travel and long distance telephone calls.

Bus, subway and train. While Americans are quite used to schedules, this will be a new concept to most refugees. Public transportation in any form was unavailable in most of their native countries, and that which did exist may have been much more limited than the systems in America. The refugees will need to learn what kinds of transportation are available to them, how to plan routes, read schedules, pay fares, etc. (pp. 22, 24, 26-27)

Car. Refugees quite accurately see America as being an automobile-oriented country; cars may be uncommon if not unheard of in their homelands. As a result, some refugees will be overwhelmed by cars at first, probably not recognizing the complexities of driving and owning a car: drivers' education, licensing, registration, etc. While understandably eager to learn how to drive and to own a car, the refugees will need to learn the many hidden expenses of automobile ownership. (pp. 23, 25)

Cab. Many refugees may be unfamiliar with the use of cabs, which are virtually non-existent in their countries. They will need help in learning how to call for or hail a cab, how much to pay, tip the driver, and so on. (p. 24)

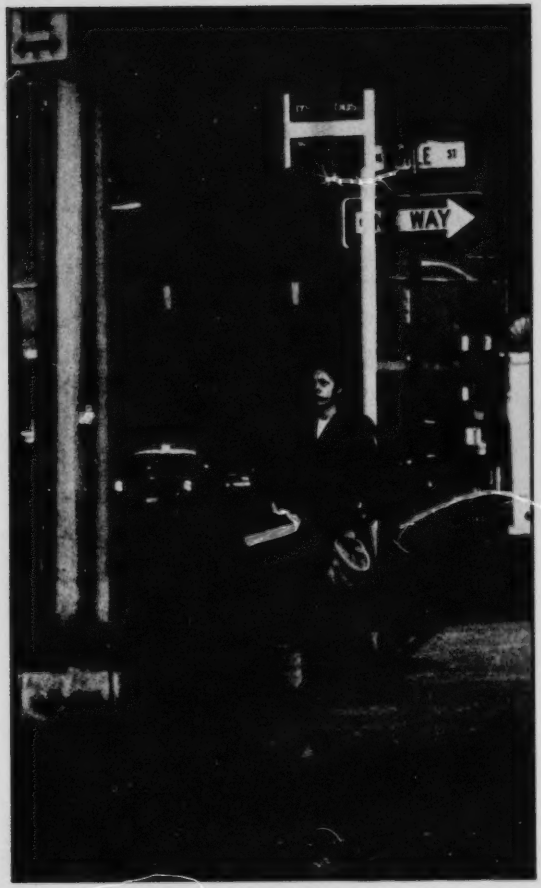
Long distance travel. While refugees have traveled several thousand miles to the United States, they probably will not know how to plan for a trip of a few hundred miles in this country. This is a new experience for them, since many refugees never before had left the villages in which they were born. If they should decide to take a trip, therefore, they will need extensive help to determine such things as the appropriate mode of travel, expenses and routes. (p. 25)

Safety. A new country offers many dangers that may not have existed in the refugee's homeland. Street crime, for example, may not have existed in a refugee's small village. Basic precautions that many Americans take for granted will need to be explained to the refugee. (p. 29)

Mail. While many refugees will be familiar with the process of mailing a letter, some may never have done so and not know of this means of communication. Under any circumstances, they will need to know where the post office is, the costs of local and overseas mail and where to receive and deposit mail. (pp. 31-32)

Telephone. Because the telephone is such a central part of American life, we may take for granted the refugee's ability to use it. In fact, some refugees have never seen a phone, so it is a good idea to demonstrate its use as soon as possible.

Long distance phone calls are so convenient that many refugees will want to call their relatives in other parts of the country without recognizing the expense involved. If local calls are so easy and inexpensive, why aren't long distance calls just as simple? Using this handbook, explain the difference between seven and ten-digit numbers, warning that the longer numbers indicate a more expensive call. (pp. 33-36)



THE STORY OF MRS. S

Several weeks after Mrs. S and her family arrived in the United States, she received a letter from a friend she had known in her native country. Her friend wrote that she and her children had just arrived in the United States. Mrs. S saw on the envelope that her friend's address was in another part of the city in which Mrs. S lived.

One morning her husband agreed to take her to the bus stop with him so that she could take the bus to her friend's house. She was very excited about seeing her friend again, and she got on the next bus that stopped. She deposited the fare her husband had told her to use and took a seat.

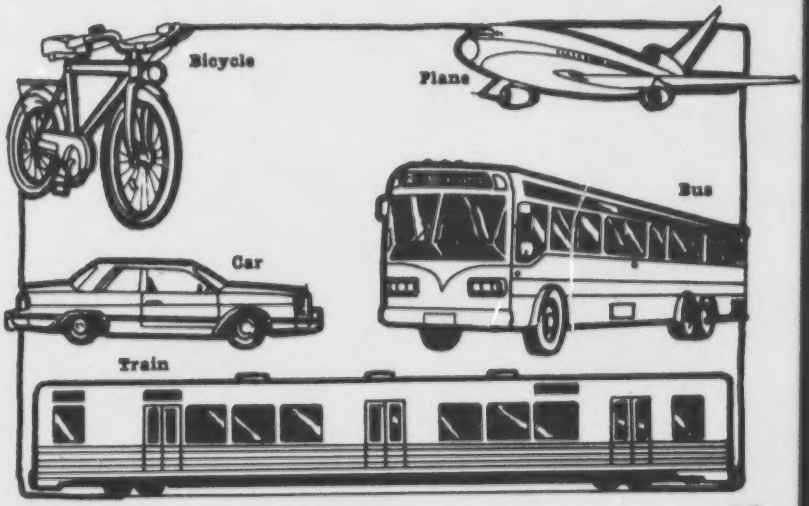
After riding for a while, Mrs. S became very nervous because she no longer recognized where she was. She turned to the woman sitting next to her and showed her the address on the friend's letter. The woman said that she was on the wrong bus. Mrs. S got off at the next stop, but she was worried because she didn't know what to do. A police officer nearby noticed her distress and came over to assist. When she showed him the address, he smiled and said that it was not very far away. He took her to a nearby grocery store and called a taxi company from a public telephone. When the cab arrived, he gave the driver the address.

They soon arrived at the apartment building with the same address as the letter. Mrs. S paid the taxi driver $2.00 for the fare and approached the building. When she found the apartment and knocked on the door, her friend answered and Mrs. S was immediately relieved. When it was time for Mrs. S to return home, she telephoned the bus company, where they told her the location of the bus stop nearest her friend's apartment and which bus she could take to get home.

TRAVEL AND

LOCAL TRAVEL

People in the U.S. get around their communities by walking or bicycle, bus, car, or subway. First you should know exactly where you want to go and about how far it is. Then you can choose the best type of transportation. You should always carry a proper ID and emergency telephone numbers so that you can ask for help.



BY WALKING

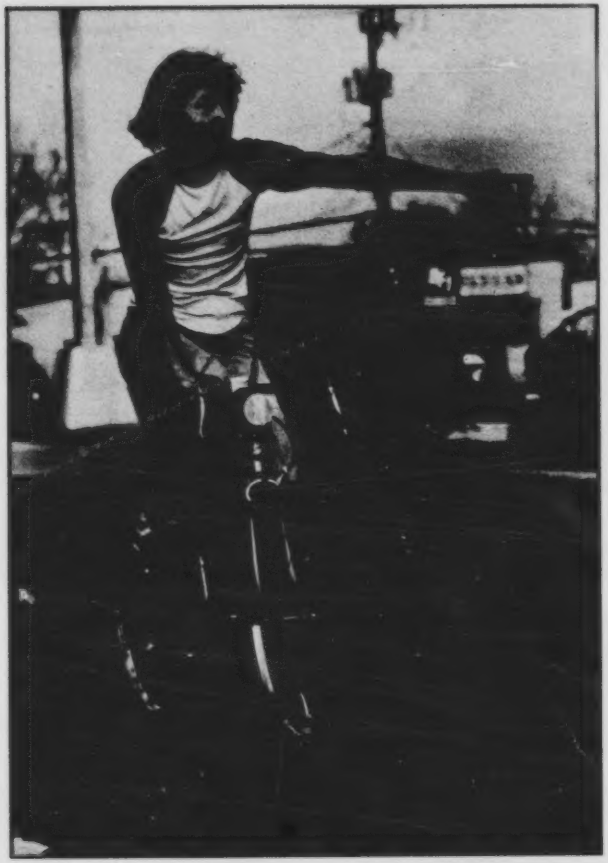
Walking is a good way to become familiar with your neighborhood. However, there are some important things you need to know about walking in your community.

- Before going out, check the temperature and weather so that you can dress appropriately.
- Know how far it is to your destination so you don't get too tired.
- LEARN THE MEANING OF "WALK"—"DON'T WALK" SIGNS WHEN CROSSING THE STREET.
- Before crossing, look to the left first and watch for cars that are turning corners from the right side.
- In some cities, you can be arrested or fined for jaywalking (crossing in the middle of the street instead of at the intersection).
- Do not accept rides with strangers.
- Do not walk alone at night.

Obey pedestrian traffic signals

40

Use hand signals for safety



BY BICYCLE

In the U.S., bicycle riding is usually for recreation and exercise. Some people ride their bicycles to school or work. In some areas, there are trails for bicycles only which are usually marked by a sign. Rules for safe bicycle riding include:

- Keep to the right at all times.
- Obey traffic signs and lights.
- Use hand signals when making a turn.
- Do not balance a passenger on handlebars or rear wheel fender. (More than one person on a bike may be dangerous or illegal. However, small seats can be attached for children.)
- Have a light and reflectors on the bike for riding at night.
- Lock the bicycle securely when parking it.

BY BUS

Traveling by bus is the most common means of public transportation. When you take a bus you must know where to get on and off. Usually, a bus has a number or letter to show which route it travels. Sometimes buses from several different routes will come to the same stop. Before you use your bus system, ask someone to help you get a schedule and learn to read it. Buses usually arrive at the stop at a specific time so be sure you are there at the correct time.

- Boarding a bus—Make sure you get on the bus by following those in front of you. In some cities, you must have the exact fare.
- Exiting from a bus—Just before your stop, pull the cord or push the button over your seat and the driver will know to stop for you. The exit door in the back usually has a light. When it is green, you can get off the bus. (Watch how other people do it.)
- Before trying to use the bus system by yourself, ask a friend or your sponsor to explain your local bus route and costs.
- The first two seats are sometimes reserved for elderly and handicapped people. Be aware of this when you look for a seat.
- Some places, it is illegal to smoke, drink, eat, play music, or drop litter on a bus.
- Be at your bus stop a little early.
- On weekends, bus schedules may change.
- In some areas, the bus doesn't stop regularly.

Boarding a bus

BY CAR AND MOTORCYCLE

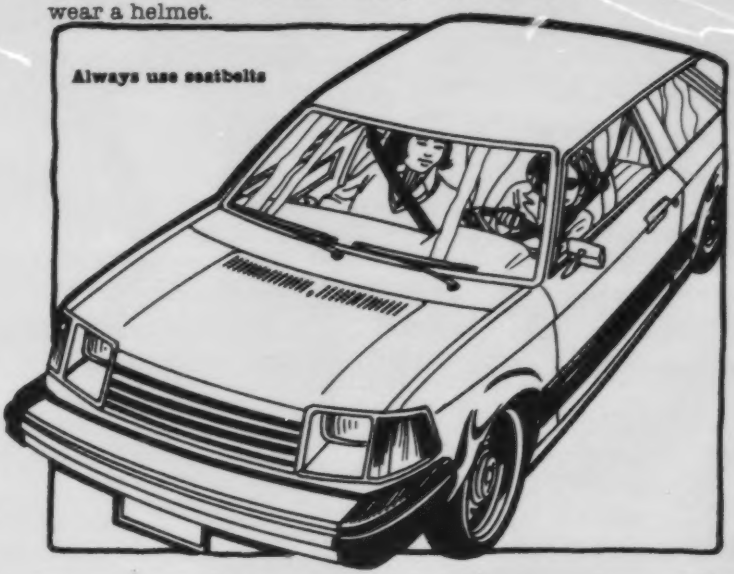
In places with little or no public transportation, the most common and convenient way to travel is often the automobile. However, it is VERY EXPENSIVE to own a car. The owner must have enough money to pay for gas, oil, maintenance, insurance, and sometimes monthly car payments. Many refugees have bought new cars and then found that they could not afford the payments or insurance. Consider buying a cheaper used car. Ask for help in choosing it. Some facts to know before owning or driving a car or motorcycle:

- Every driver must have a license to operate a vehicle.
- The vehicle must be registered in the state where the owner lives.
- It is illegal to drive if you have been drinking alcohol.
- In most states, you must be at least 16 years old to get a license.
- Most towns have driver education courses. These teach you to drive so you can pass the test and get your license.
- Most states require the owner to buy insurance to pay for damages if there is an accident.

ALL OF THESE FACTS VARY FROM STATE TO STATE. Each state has a Department of Motor Vehicles where specific information is available. Ask your sponsor or a friend about the laws in your state.

Motorcycles

The laws for motorcycles are much the same as for cars. You may be required to have a special license and to wear a helmet. It is always much safer to wear a helmet.



BY TAXI ("CAB")

Taxis are found in large cities and often in other areas. The fare is expensive and taxi drivers usually expect a 10% tip after the trip. In most situations, the price is determined by a meter or by zones. If you travel long distances, you may be able to negotiate the price.

You can call a taxi from your home or anywhere at any time of the day or night. The yellow pages of the telephone book will have the numbers under TAXICAB.

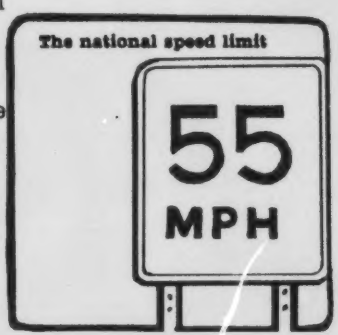
Hailing a cab

BY SUBWAY OR TRAIN

In some large cities, there is a fast train called the subway, which travels under and above ground. To use the subway, you must know where the stations are located, how to pay the fare, and where the trains go. If your area has a subway or train, ask a friend or your sponsor to help you become familiar with it.

BY CAR

- Check car for oil and engine troubles before traveling.
- Always wear a seatbelt.
- Know how to read road maps and highway signs. (Maps are often available at gas stations.)
- Food and gas are available along or near the road or highway.
- When sleepy, stop at the side of the road or at rest areas on the sides of highways.
- Throwing trash out of the window is illegal. If the police see you, you could be fined.
- Do not give rides to strangers.
- Keep your car doors locked at all times.
- Never drive if you have been taking strong medicine or drinking alcohol.
- If you have car trouble, pull car over to side of road, put blinkers on, and wait for someone to help.
- Do not drive faster than the speed limit on the signs along the road. Some large highways have toll stations where you must stop and pay a fee.
- Before you leave, look at the road map, and decide how far you are going and how long it will take you, so you can plan well.



BY BUS

- Tickets are bought at the bus station. Get to the station early to buy a ticket.
- Know the time the bus leaves for your destination. (Buses usually leave on time.)
- Toilets are usually available in the back of the bus.
- Observe rules about no smoking, eating, drinking, and playing music.
- Meals can be bought at small restaurants where the bus usually stops at mealtimes.

BY TRAIN

It is more comfortable to travel by train than by bus, but it is also a little more expensive and trains do not go very many routes.

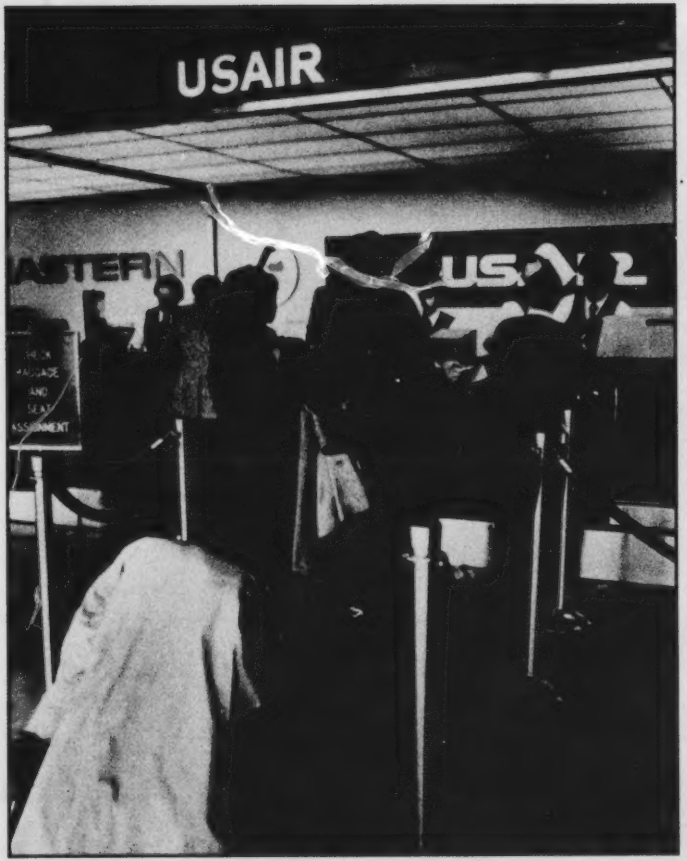
- Tickets are usually bought at the train station.
- Trains leave on time so you must be early.
- Restrooms are available on the train.
- A restaurant is available if you don't bring your own meals, but it can be expensive.
- Make sure that you know the gate number where you get on your train.
- Some cars on the train may have a different destination. Ask a conductor to show you which car to get on.
- Some cars on the train are only for people who do not smoke. Look for signs or ask the conductor.
- It is not safe to lean out of train windows.
- Traveling overnight by train is cheaper for families than going by plane for long distances.
- If you don't want to sleep in a regular seat, you can reserve a sleeping compartment, but it will be more expensive.

Train conductor collecting tickets

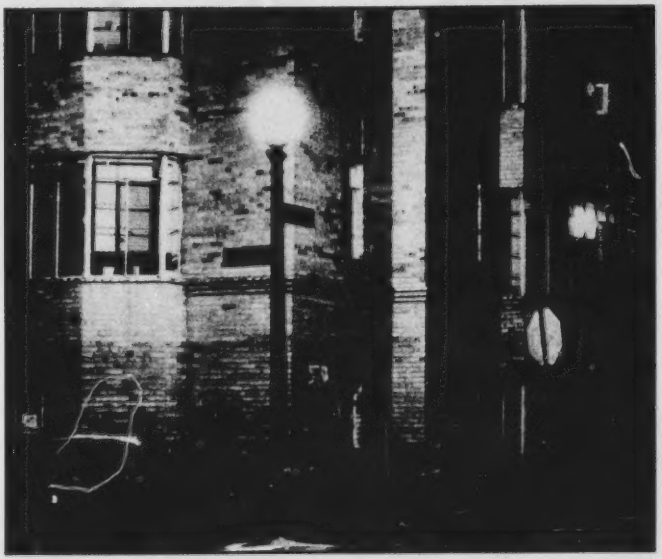
BY PLANE

- Traveling by plane is usually the most expensive means of transportation.
- You can travel by plane to most cities and many large towns in and outside the U.S.
- Discount tickets may be available if purchased in advance. Travel agencies should have this information.
- All passengers should report to the ticket counter at least 45 minutes before the flight leaves.
- Airlines have rules about luggage and what they can allow. Know how much luggage the airline allows. Sometimes this is two suitcases and one small bag per person.
- Before you get on the airplane, officials will check you and your luggage for any weapons or dangerous materials.

ASK YOUR FRIENDS OR SPONSOR FOR INFORMATION ABOUT PLANE TRAVEL IN YOUR AREA.

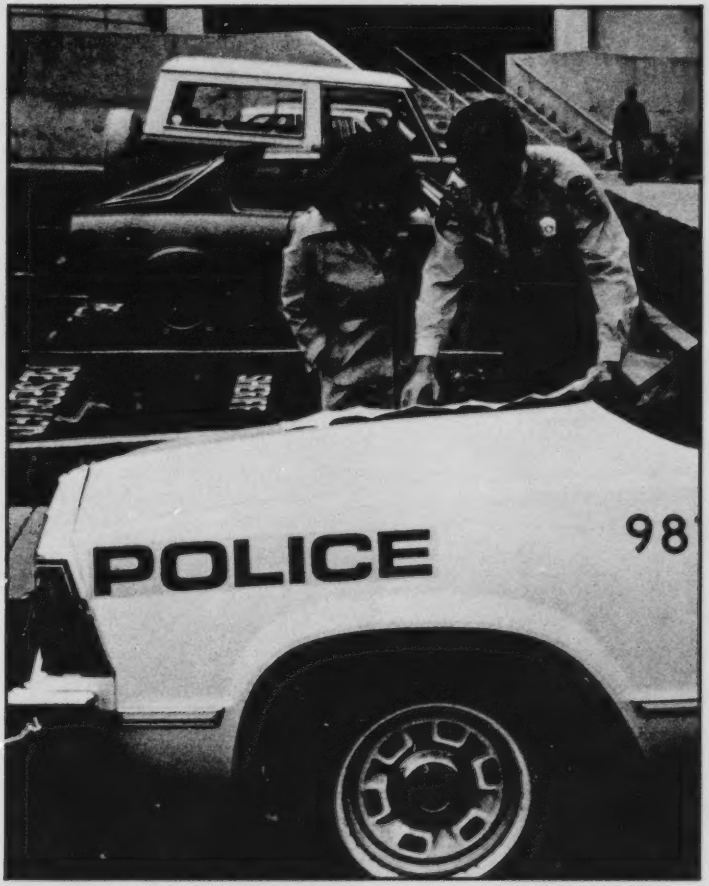


- Avoid dark places where you cannot be easily seen by others..
- Beware of places where there is nobody else present. It is less likely that you will be bothered if there are others around.
- Avoid walking alone at night.
- Keep your children home at night. It is dangerous for them to be outside alone after dark.
- It is a general rule that you should be wary of strangers. Warn your children not to accept rides or gifts from people they don't know. Women should be particularly careful of men they don't know, because there is always the danger of rape.
- It is generally unsafe to carry cash or valuables with you. If you must, keep them in a pocket or purse, out of the sight of potential thieves.



- Most important, do not hesitate to call the police if something happens to you or if you are suspicious of someone. It is better to call the police unnecessarily than to jeopardize your own safety. You are entitled to the protection and assistance available to all Americans.

IF YOU ARE A VICTIM OF ANY CRIME, CALL THE POLICE IMMEDIATELY. IN MOST AREAS YOU CAN DIAL AN EMERGENCY NUMBER, 911, TO REACH THE POLICE. YOU CAN ALSO DIAL "0" TO REACH THE TELEPHONE OPERATOR WHO WILL HELP YOU.



COMMUNICATION

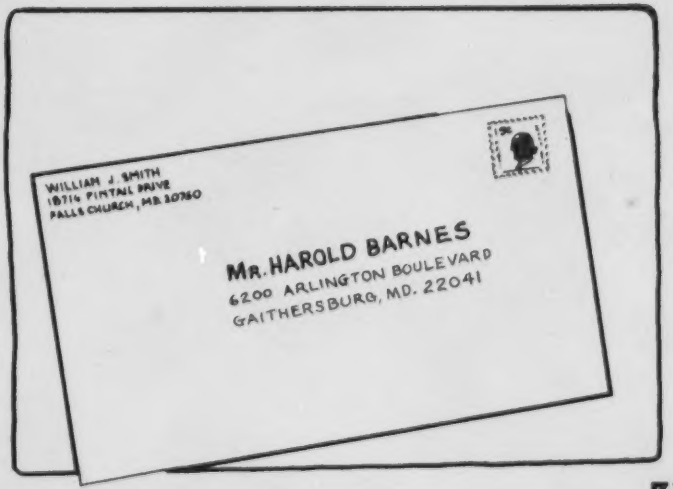
There are many easy ways to communicate with your friends, relatives, or anyone you want to contact. The most common ways are by mail or telephone. If you have a very important message that must get there quickly, you can send a telegram but it is expensive.

BY MAIL

When sending a letter, you should write the address in English clearly and completely. The address must have

(1) Name of person
(2) Street address of person plus apartment number (or P.O. Box number)
(3) City and state
(4) Zip code.

Your name and address should be put on the envelope also. Put it on the upper lefthand corner or on the back of the envelope. If for some reason the letter cannot be delivered, it will be returned to you.



SENDING MAIL

- To send mail, you must use stamps.
- Stamps for the correct amount of postage can be purchased at the post office.
- Letters going outside the U.S. are more expensive to mail, except those to Canada.
- Aerograms are less expensive to send. They can be sent anywhere in the world, but you cannot put any objects inside.
- Post offices are usually closed on Sundays, holidays, and sometimes on Saturday.
- Mailboxes, usually red and blue, are outside near the street and at the post office.
- Packages and tapes can be mailed at the post office.
- Never send cash through the mail. Send certified bank drafts.
- In the country, there usually are boxes outside the house. Put the red flag up to indicate there is a letter to be sent.
- When moving to a new address, inform the postal service. Forms are available at the post office.
- When sending important documents, ask the post office about registered mail.

Country mailbox

RECEIVING MAIL

Mail arrives at your home daily except on Sundays and holidays. In an apartment building, a box is assigned to you and usually is located near the main entrance. Some people receive their mail at the post office, where they rent a box.

If you receive unfamiliar mail or mail with someone else's name on it, don't open it. Ask a friend to explain. Sometimes it should be returned to the sender or it may be just an advertisement.

Talking on the telephone at home

BY TELEPHONE

The telephone is the most useful and popular form of communication in the U.S. There are many places where you can find a phone to use. There are public or pay phones, or private phones in offices, stores, and people's homes.

MAKING A PHONE CALL

Each phone has a separate number. Every number has an area code (000) and seven digits (000-0000). For local calls in your area, use the last seven digits only. To call long distance, use other numbers plus the last seven numbers. (See section on long distance dialing.) To use the phone:

(1) Pick up the receiver
(2) Listen for dial tone
(3) Dial each number separately
(4) Wait for person to answer after it rings
(5) Speak.

Busy signal indicates person's phone is not free.

PRIVATE PHONES

To have a phone installed in your house or apartment, contact the local phone company.

TYPES OF SERVICES: Before the phone is installed, the company may require a deposit. Depending on where you live, there may be three different types of services available at different costs.

- **Limited:** Only a certain amount of local calls are allowed out per month for a basic charge. Any additional calls cost extra.
- **Unlimited:** Any amount of local calls out are allowed. This service is somewhat more expensive.
- **Party lines:** More than one household shares the same number.

BE CAREFUL NOT TO BUY SERVICES THAT YOU DON'T NEED.

LONG DISTANCE

If you want to call someone in another town or state, you must use long distance calling. There is a monthly charge for local calls but each long distance call costs extra. You are charged by the minute so the longer you talk the more expensive it is. These charges come on your monthly phone bill.

There are two basic types of long distance calls: direct dialed or operator assisted.

- **DIRECT DIALED CALLS**—You use a combination phone number (1 + area code + phone number). You call directly to the other person and don't talk to the operator. The cheapest times to call are at night and on weekends and holidays. Know the time difference when you make your call. Example: California is three hours earlier than New York. If calling from California at 4 p.m. it is 7 p.m. in New York.
- **OPERATOR ASSISTED CALLS**—Each phone has an "0" to indicate operator assistance. You must dial "0" to start this type of call and talk to the operator. You can call collect or person-to-person.
- **Collect calls**—A long distance call where the other party must agree to pay the cost.
- **Person-to-person**—A long distance call where you ask to speak to a specific person.

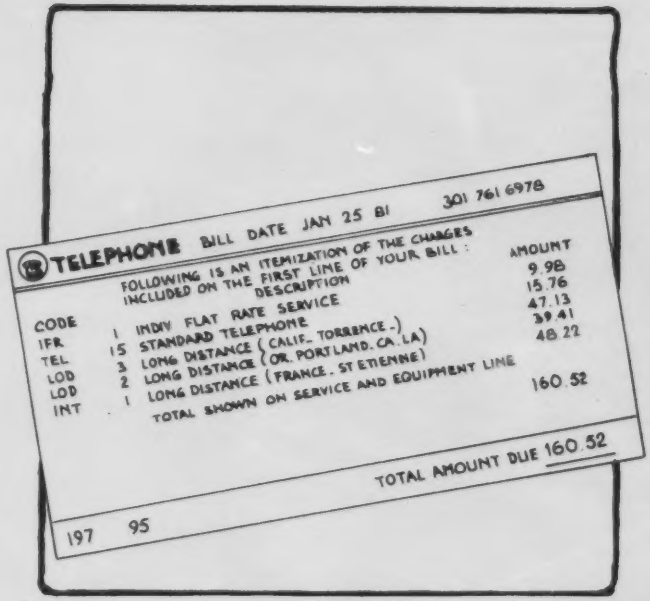
Your Telephone Book

The white pages have telephone numbers listed by people's last names, which are in alphabetical order. The "yellow pages" have the numbers of companies or services.

PHONE BILL

Phone bills come every month and must be paid on time. If not paid, the phone company may disconnect the phone.

CAUTION: Long Distance is expensive!


TELEPHONE BILL DATE JAN 25 81
301 761 6978
FOLLOWING IS AN ITEMIZATION OF THE CHARGES INCLUDED ON THE FIRST LINE OF YOUR BILL :
CODE
DESCRIPTION
AMOUNT
IFR 1 INDIV FLAT RATE SERVICE 9.98
TEL 15 STANDARD TELEPHONE 15.76
LOD 3 LONG DISTANCE (CALIF.-TORRENCE.-) 47.13
LOD 2 LONG DISTANCE (OR. PORTLAND. CA. LA) 39.41
INT 1 LONG DISTANCE (FRANCE.-ST ETIENNE) 48.22
TOTAL SHOWN ON SERVICE AND EQUIPMENT LINE 160.52
TOTAL AMOUNT DUE 160.52
197 95

PUBLIC TELEPHONES

Public telephones can be found at gas stations, restaurants, shopping centers, at some street intersections, and at the airport, train, and bus stations. In using public phones, keep the following information in mind:

- Insert change in the slot. The cost for a local call may be 10 to 25 cents.
- A long distance call requires a large amount of coins. An operator must assist you to make this call and will tell you how much it costs.
- If the person is not at home or their line is busy, your money will be returned when you hang up. Check in the bottom of the box before you leave.

HOT LINE & TOLL FREE NUMBERS

Some long distance numbers can be called at no cost. For example: to call about orientation information, call ORC at

(800) 424-3701

The 800 at the beginning means a free line to you!

TELEGRAMS

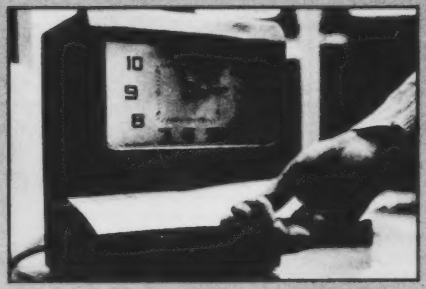
If you need to send a telegram, call the telegraph office, tell them the message, and give them the address. You can also send money through the telegraph office.

It is an expensive way to communicate and should be used only when necessary. Post offices do not provide telegram service.

CHECKLIST

- ☐ How to use public transportation.
- ☐ Laws regarding walking, bicycling and driving.
- ☐ Principles of traffic safety and how to avoid accidents.
- ☐ How to use public emergency transportation, such as ambulances.
- ☐ How to get a driver's license.
- ☐ How to obtain a telephone and whether you will need to pay a deposit.
- ☐ Where a public (pay) telephone is located and how to use it.
- ☐ How to telephone someone in case of emergency.
- ☐ Be sure you and your children have memorized your address and telephone number in case of emergency; carry these with you at all times.
- ☐ Which phone calls are free ("local") and which cost money ("long distance").
- ☐ How to compute charges for long distance phone calls.
- ☐ How to use the post office and their charges for services.
- ☐ How to send a telegram.

YOUR JOB IN THE UNITED STATES



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BACKGROUND NOTES

One of the most confusing aspects of American life for a new refugee is the American employment system, since many elements of that system are drastically different from anything they encountered in their own countries. Careers in their own countries were often determined by family: if your father is a fisherman, that is what you will be. The apprentice system was much more common than in America, and the concept of upward mobility and the American tendency to move from job to job is entirely new to most refugees. Once they started in a career or working for a company, that is usually how they would spend their entire working lives. Benefits, such as insurance, vacation time and sick leave may also be new concepts.

Once a refugee is working, he or she will encounter many job practices that Americans take for granted. Many problems can occur because the refugee is not aware of expectations of supervisors, including the need to be at work on time, calling in if sick, and giving two weeks' notice before leaving a job. Paychecks and deductions are also unfamiliar. The refugee will need help in understanding these and other basic employment practices in America.

Employment Agencies. Since the refugees may be accustomed in the native country to having friends or relatives help find them jobs, the concept of an employment agency will be new. As a result, it is necessary to not only find the appropriate employment services, public or private, but also to explain how to use them. Other ways of finding jobs, such as looking in the newspaper and looking for "Help Wanted" signs, are equally foreign to the refugee and must be explained. (p. 49)

Social Security Card. Such forms of identification are not found in many countries, and refugees from those countries will not be aware that such things exist, much less how to apply for them. Because the refugees

will need the Social Security card before working, and in order to apply for some types of government assistance, it is important to help them apply for one. (p. 51)

Resume. Very few refugees will be familiar with a resume because they are rarely used in their own countries. The handbook explains in great detail how to prepare a resume. At the end of the section is a sample job application that can also be used for practice, because most refugees have never seen such an application form. (p. 52)

Job Interview. Americans know the basic "do's and don'ts" of job interviews: how to dress, how to discuss one's experience, questions to ask, etc. All of this will be new to the refugees. It can help to have a "practice session" with the refugees to familiarize them with what to expect in an American job interview. (p. 53)

Paycheck. The first paycheck the refugee gets in America may be the first he or she has ever received. Not only will it be important to explain the deductions and the difference between net and gross pay, the refugee will also need help cashing the check (see also FINANCES AND CONSUMER EDUCATION). (pp. 57-58)

THE STORY OF MR. L

Mr. L, a high-ranking civil servant in his own country, came to the United States and started working as a custodian in an elementary school. He felt embarrassed and frustrated for having to accept such employment, but what could he do? Since Mr. L's sponsor helped him to get the job, Mr. L did not want to tell his sponsor how much he hated the job for fear that his sponsor would think him ungrateful. He was reluctant to look for other work out of loyalty to his sponsor.

Mr. L felt trapped. He became more and more withdrawn. A friend of Mr. L became concerned and went to the local MAA for advice. Mr. T of the MAA offered to talk to Mr. L. Mr. T assured Mr. L that his sponsor would understand his desire to find a better job and would not be insulted if he did so.

Mr. T also explained that even though Mr. L was under-employed, he would have to learn more English to get a better job. Many of the local ESL classes had waiting lists, but Mr. T helped Mr. L enroll in an ESL/job training program within a few weeks.

Mr. L continued to work part time as a custodian while studying to improve his English and learn computer programming. When he completed the program, the school helped him find a good job. Mr. L now has a job he likes with prospects for career advancement.

CHILDREN WORK TOO

You can see this attitude in the way American parents teach their children at a young age the value of work and self-reliance. It is not uncommon for American parents to pay their children to do chores around the house. Children of 10 to 15 years of age may deliver newspapers every morning before going to school. Older children work part time after school, on the weekends, or during vacations. In this way they learn the value of work, even work that is done with the hands. They also learn how to handle money and become self-reliant.

ACTIVE OLDER PEOPLE

Americans believe that people should work if they are able to. Many Americans reject the idea of retiring at 65 by continuing to work while they still enjoy good health.

ASSISTANCE FOR THE NEEDY

Most Americans also feel that some people need special help. These include people who are physically, mentally, or emotionally handicapped or who are too old to work and parents who need extra money to support their children. This special help is called welfare. It is money and other aid that the government gives to people who need it. The money for welfare comes from taxes paid by the people who work.

Because of the way Americans feel about work and welfare, your sponsor, Voluntary Agency, and other Americans will encourage you to look for a job as soon as you can. They will also expect you to keep any job you have until you can find a better job. You will be viewed negatively if you constantly reject job offers or quit your job and rely on welfare.

Senior citizen still on the job

Busboy clearing away dishes

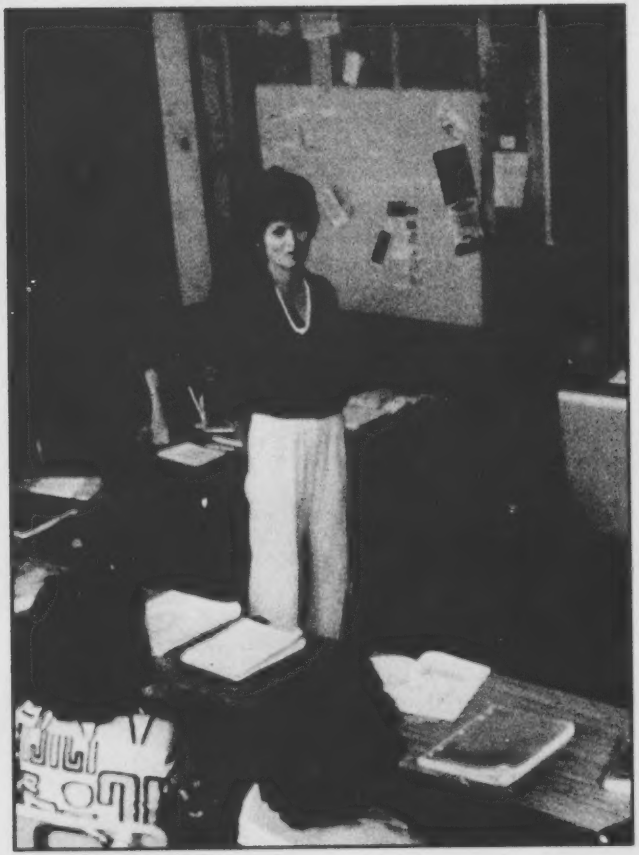
UNSKILLED WORKERS

Examples of unskilled workers are janitors, dishwashers, waiters, and busboys. These jobs are easy to find because they do not require a skill or a good knowledge of English. Often they pay at or below the U.S. minimum wage. Many refugees work in these jobs and study English or a skill at the same time, hoping they will be able to find better employment.

SKILLED WORKERS

Examples of skilled workers are auto mechanics, plumbers, hairdressers, typists. These jobs require some training and fairly good English, and salaries depend on the worker's experience. The earnings of an experienced plumber may be higher than those of an average white-collar worker.

Typical skilled workers: hairdresser (above); typist (below); and mechanic (right)



PROFESSIONALS

Examples of professionals are teachers, engineers, pharmacists, doctors, lawyers. Most of these jobs require at least a college degree. Each state has its own laws which regulate—and limit—the practice of many professions. For example, a doctor who wants to practice his career in a new state must pass the board exam to be certified by that state.

Teacher conducting a class (left); pharmacist filling prescriptions (right)

Kitchen work can be part-time

FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT

Usually, a full-time job requires 35 to 40 hours of work per week. Since most businesses in the U.S. operate from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, these are also the most common hours of work for many occupations. Places like stores, factories, or restaurants, with different hours of operation, may have different work hours or shifts for their employees.

PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

The hours of a part-time job will vary according to the job itself and the employer or place of work. It may be for as few as two or three hours or as many as 35 hours per week. Part-time jobs offer more flexibility, enabling you to work and participate in other activities at the same time. For example, with a part-time job you can attend school part of the day and still work part of the day.

FRIENDS AND SPONSORS

Refugees often find jobs through the advice or recommendation of a sponsor, friend, or acquaintance. Mutual Assistance Associations (MAAs) and the voluntary agencies can be especially helpful here.

STATE EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES

Public employment offices help you find suitable jobs free of charge. When you register with one of these agencies, a job counselor will help you establish your file and advise you about jobs that are available in your area. When necessary, the counselor may recommend an English or vocational training course for you to take. If you wish, the counselor will sometimes register you for that course.

Counseling at a state employment office

SIGNS ON BUILDINGS

Information about job vacancies in a particular area is also available at public libraries, large private companies, and major government offices. Many restaurants advertise their openings by putting up signs on the windows saying "HELP WANTED". If a sign interests you, walk inside and ask to speak with the manager.

THE NEWSPAPER

In the employment section of a newspaper's Classified Ads, you will find a list of job openings arranged alphabetically, such as Auto Mechanic, Dishwasher, Typist. Each advertisement usually contains a brief description of the job, its requirements, and the salary offered. It also will have a telephone number or an address to call or write to for job applications.

PRIVATE EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES

These places can refer you to lots of jobs, but often charge you or your future employer a fee if you are hired. If you need their help, ask them about the terms and conditions of their contract. Consider these carefully to see if there would be any advantage in taking the job to which you are referred.

APPLYING FOR A JOB

THE SOCIAL SECURITY CARD AND I-94

To work in the United States you must have a Social Security number. Every refugee should apply for a Social Security number as soon as possible after arriving in the U.S. Even if you will not be working right away, it is still important to have a Social Security number.

You can apply for your Social Security number at the local Social Security office. A friend or your sponsor can help you do this. After your application for a number has been processed, you will receive a card with your Social Security number on it. This number will always remain the same. It doesn't matter whether you move, marry, change jobs, or change your name, you will always have the same Social Security number.

When you go to apply for a job, you should bring your Social Security card and your I-94 with you. These two documents show that you have permission to work in the United States.

THE FACT SHEET (RESUME)

Before you begin your job hunt, you should prepare a fact sheet, usually called a resume. In this you give information about your background and experience. This will help you to more easily fill out the application form available at your prospective employer. Sometimes you may enclose it with your letter of application or inquiry. Depending on the nature or type of the job you are seeking, the fact sheet will usually include the following:

- your name address, and current telephone number
- your Social Security number (very important)
- names and addresses of your current and/or previous employer
- your salary history, dates of employment, and a brief description of the duties and responsibilities of the positions you've held
- schools attended, including vocational training courses, dates attended, and degrees earned
- three references with names, addresses, and telephone numbers
- other relevant experience, including activities and volunteer work in, for example, the community, church, or camps.

THE INTERVIEW

When seeking a job, the first thing you should do is to contact the employer or his representative. This is usually done by phone. A friend or your sponsor may call to make an appointment for you.

Reviewing a fact sheet during an interview

Most jobs require interviews. An interview is a talk between you and the employer. During this talk the interviewer will ask you many questions to find out if you are qualified for the job or if you will be a reliable employee. The interviewer will probably ask you how long you have been in the U.S. and where you have worked and studied before.

To prepare for your job interview, you should anticipate the questions that the employer may ask about your background, experience, and job interests. You can then have your answers ready. In addition, you should find out about the job you apply for so you can talk appropriately about the job and convince the interviewer that you are qualified for it. Before you go to an interview, remember to do the following things:

Be on time.

Do not come too early or too late. You should get to the appointment place about five minutes before the interview. Americans value punctuality highly.

Be neatly dressed.

Dress appropriately for the type of work you are being interviewed for and be sure to have a neat appearance. If you have questions about what you should wear, a friend or your sponsor can help you decide.

Bring an interpreter if necessary.

Bring a fact sheet (resume).

Having a fact sheet in hand will enable you to fill out the application properly and accurately. Also, you won't be mixed up when answering the interviewer's questions. On the fact sheet, include work experience in your native country and in the U.S.

Be confident and calm.

During the interview, you should give the employer the impression that you are capable of doing the job and will enjoy doing it. Look at the interviewer in the face when you answer his questions so that he will feel you are honest and self-confident.

Be tactful.

Since your job during the interview is to answer the questions asked by the employer, confine yourself to asking him only necessary things if you are invited to do so. Make him feel that you are very interested in the work. Only ask him about your salary and benefits at the end of the interview, if he does not bring up the subject.

Follow-up the results of the interview.

Before the interview ends, you may ask the employer to tell you when you will hear from him. An interview does not mean that you will get the job. If the interview goes well and you are optimistic about it, it is a good idea to write the employer a short note when you return home, thanking him for taking the time to talk with you. It may take several days or weeks to know if the interview has been successful and if you will be offered the job. Be patient and continue to look at other jobs while you are waiting to hear.

WORK HOURS

Find out which days you are to work and what time you start and finish. Time is very important in the U.S. Employees are expected to be at work at the required time. If you are frequently late or absent from work without a good reason, you can lose your job.

COMPANY RULES

Many work places have rules for employees. These rules may include: how much time you get for lunch or other breaks, what kind of clothes you wear, whether you can smoke or eat on the job. There may also be safety rules and regulations which you need to know about. Find out from your employer what rules the company has.

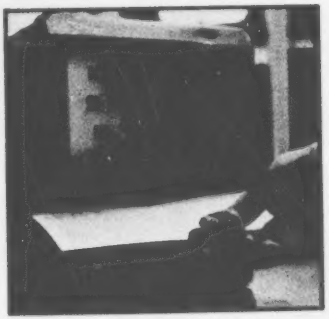
FRINGE BENEFITS

Depending on the type of company you work for and its policies, you also may be eligible for several other kinds of compensation besides your salary. These are called "fringe benefits" and include health and life insurance, unemployment compensation, retirement benefits, and annual and sick leave. Ask your employer about the fringe benefits you will receive in your job.

ON THE JOB

Once you have started working, you may need to know about:

TIME CLOCK



Some companies use a time clock. A time clock is a machine that records the amount of time each employee has worked. Employees use the machine to record when they arrive at work and when they leave. Sometimes employees may also have to record time taken for lunch and other breaks. They do this by placing a card into the machine which then records the time on it. This is called "punching the time card." Each employee has his or her own time card. If your company has a time clock, ask your supervisor or another employee to show you how to use it.

CALLING IN

If you are going to be absent or late, always let your employer know ahead of time. If necessary, call your employer or supervisor to tell them you will be absent or late and to let them know the reason.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD

Many companies have what is called a "probationary period." This refers to the first several weeks or months that a person works for an employer. This is considered a "trial" period: the employer evaluates you and your work to see if you are a good employee. Your employment might be terminated during this time without good cause.

GETTING PAID

Find out from your employer when and how frequently you will receive your pay. Also ask if someone will be coming to give your pay to you or if you must go to some central point to pick it up.

THE PAYCHECK

You may be paid either every week, every two weeks, or once every month. In some cases, employees receive cash in an envelope, but it is more common to receive your money in the form of a check. A paycheck usually has two parts: one part, with your name and the amount of money you earned, is the check itself; the other part is called the "stub" or "receipt" and lists deductions that have been made from your total pay. Your check, then, may be for less money than you expected.

Every employer makes certain deductions from employees' paychecks. There are usually three deductions: one for the Social Security tax, one for the state tax, and a third for the federal tax.

The sample pay stub shows typical deductions:

Deductions This Pay Period

F.I.C.A	State	Federal	Health Ins.
$7.36	$2.26	$2.26	$00.00
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)

Gross 120.00 **Net** 106.64

1. This is the Social Security tax. It is also called F.I.C.A. Part of this money will be returned to you when you are old enough to retire or if you are injured before then and can't work.

2. This is the state tax, which goes to the state government to pay for education, social services, running the state government, and so on. (See section TAXES.)

3. This is the federal tax, which goes to the federal government in Wash ington, D.C. It pays for running the federal government, national defense, and other federal programs. (See section TAXES.)

4. Companies which offer fringe benefits (such as health insurance) to their employees usually deduct a part of the cost of these benefits from the employees' paychecks. In this case the deduction will appear on the pay stub.

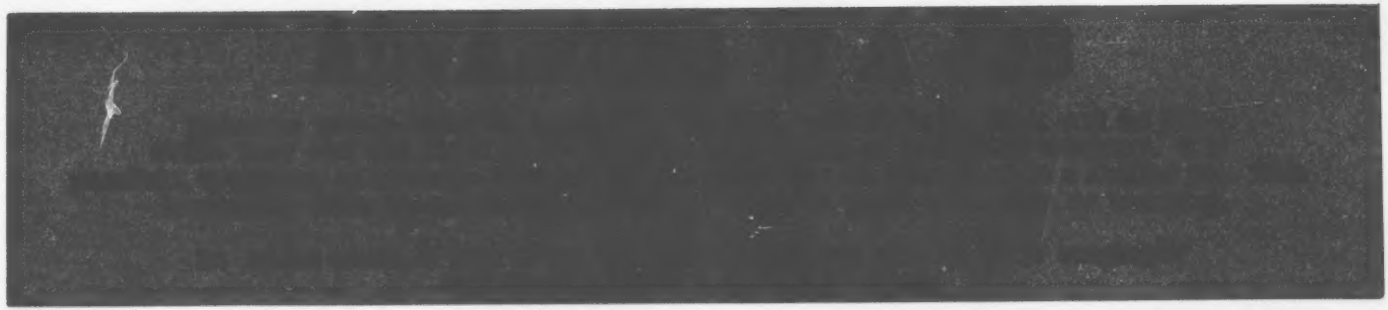
Be sure to save all of your check stubs. You may need them when it comes time to fill out your income tax forms. (See section TAXES)

CASHING YOUR PAYCHECK

After you have received your paycheck, put it in a safe place. As soon as possible, cash it or deposit it in a bank. You may have trouble cashing it if you wait too long. If you lose your check, tell your supervisor right away. To cash a check you must sign your name on the back. Don't sign your name until you are ready to cash it. When you sign your name, spell it and write the parts of it in the same order as it appears on the front of the check.

UNION AND GUILD DUES

In some companies or places of work, employees may belong to a union or guild. Membership in a union or guild is usually optional. For some companies or for certain jobs, union or guild membership may be required to comply with job certification requirements, company rules, or contract agreements. To belong to a union, you must pay a fee, called dues.



Adults learning to type

LEARNING A SKILL

Most areas of the U.S. have training programs where you can learn a job skill. Some of these programs are supported by the government. Others charge tuition which can vary from inexpensive to expensive. Most of these programs require some knowledge of English.

ADULT EDUCATION

Many communities have skills training classes for adults. These programs provide English classes and vocational training for people age 16 and over. The classes usually meet in high schools in the evening. There is a tuition, but it is usually quite low. Before each term, the registration office sends a class schedule with information about courses, class locations, and course fees to prospective applicants. Often you can work during the day and go to school at night.

COMMUNITY COLLEGES

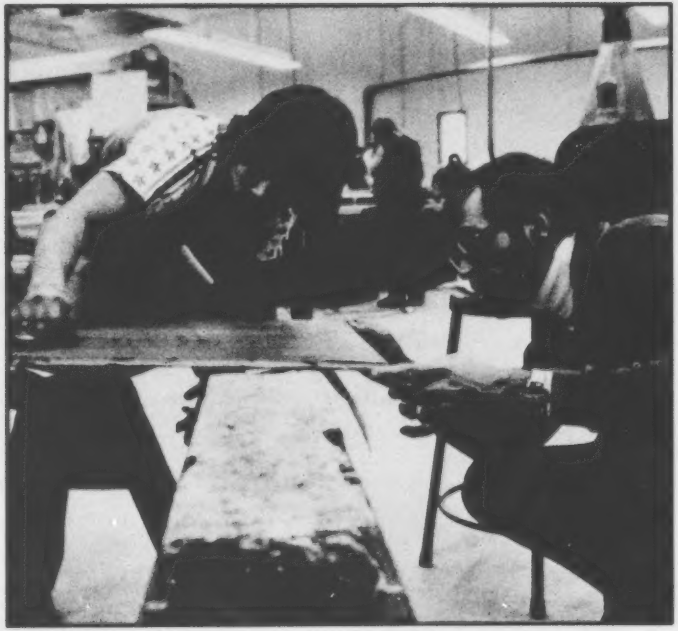
These colleges sometimes offer very good skills training classes. The tuition in these classes is usually higher than in adult education classes. Low-income students are usually eligible for a Basic Educational Opportunity Grant (BEOG) which may cover the costs of tuition, books, and transportation. These courses usually require a good knowledge of English.

VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

Many areas of the country have schools at the high school and college level which specifically teach vocational-technical skills. Depending on the level and subject areas, these schools usually offer programs for obtaining a diploma, degree, or certification in a particular occupation. Tuition for these schools varies.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Private skills training schools usually place advertisements in newspapers and magazines about their career training programs. A listing of such schools may be found in the yellow pages section of the phone book. These schools usually charge very high tuition and vary greatly in the quality of their programs. You should inquire carefully about such a school before you consider registering.



Learning to operate carpentry tools

For more information on training programs, contact the state employment agency in your area.

Many firms are willing to pay tuition for their employees who wish to take courses which are essential for their career advancement. It is important to realize that graduation from a skills training class or program does not guarantee employment or advancement. Whether or not you find or move into a good job after you finish your training will depend on:

- the job market in your area
- your knowledge of the skill
- your knowledge of English

Before you enter a skills training program, you should make sure that there will be jobs available in the community for the occupation for which you will be training.

CETA (Comprehensive Employment and Training Act)

This is a federally funded program that gives skills training to students who are seriously interested in finding skilled jobs. This program pays the students a small amount of money while they are learning a skill.

Because of a limited number of openings, students sometimes have to wait several months to get into a class. Most of these classes require good English. For further information about CETA, call the toll-free number listed at the end of this section, or the local CETA program office.

JOB CORPS

Sponsored by the Labor Department, this special vocational training program provides youths aged 16 to 21 from low-income families with opportunities to finish their high school or college education and to study a skill at the same time. Each student who is admitted to this program is provided free tuition, room and board, and a small stipend to cover personal expenses for a period of six months to two years, depending on the type of training he/she is undergoing. When graduating he/she will be given a special allowance, called adjustment money, which is used to cover living expenses while looking for employment.

Students in the Job Corps program learn a variety of skills such as nursing, secretarial work, cooking, radio and TV repair, carpentry. For further information about this program, call the toll-free number listed at the end of this section, or the local Job Corps program office.

Mechanic in training

CHANGING JOBS

When you are with a company, you may look for a better job elsewhere and change to your new job without making your employer angry. However, before you leave your job, make sure that:

- You are certain of another job.
- You give your employer at least two weeks' notice, so he will have enough time to find someone to replace you. This is important for you, too, because your employer may be contacted and requested to give his opinion about your ability and character. Besides, you may sometimes need a recommendation from your previous employer, and his observations may influence the future of your career.

Leaving a job with employer's good wishes

SAMPLE
JOB APPLICATION

1. Title of position _____ Beginning date _____ Salary _____

2. Name Mr. / Mrs. / Miss _____
Last (Print) First Middle (Maiden Name)

3. Mailing address _____ Home telephone _____
Street and No. City State Zip Code Alternate no. _____

4. How long immediately preceding this date have you lived in this County? _____

5. In case of accident, notify _____ Address _____ Phone _____

6. Age _____ Date of birth _____ Social Security No. ___ / ___ / ___ U.S. Citizen? _____

7. Marital Status: Single _____ Married _____ Widowed _____ Separated _____ Divorced _____

8. If married, spouse is employed by: _____ City _____

9. List ages and relationship of all persons dependent upon you _____

_____

10. Indicate any disease or physical disability, defect, or infirmity _____
Indicate nature and extent of handicap, whether permanent, and whether military service-connected

_____

11. Circle the highest grade you completed in each school — Name and location of school — Dates

High School 9 10 11 12 — Course

College 1 2 3 4 — Major Minors

Post-grad: Semester Hrs. _____ — Course

Professional/vocational schools — Courses (if part-time, indicate)

12. Give your complete employment record during the last 5 years, and ALSO any earlier experience of the kind required for this kind of position. List your positions in the order of dates, your present or most recent position first.

From Mo./Yr.	To Mo./Yr.	Employer's name, address, telephone number and name of last supervisor	Salary	Position—state your title, describe duties	Reason for leaving

13. What are your hobbies and interests? _____

_____

14. Applicant's Signature _____ Date _____

CHECKLIST

- ☐ Contact your resettlement agency or employment office to arrange an assessment of your job skills and employment opportunities.
- ☐ Find out what job programs or vocational training is available.
- ☐ Find out where the local employment centers (such as Job Services) are located.
- ☐ Obtain personal counseling regarding your employment goals.
- ☐ Learn how to prepare a resume with the help of your sponsor or others.
- ☐ Practice filling out a job application, using the sample in this book.
- ☐ Ask your sponsor to help you practice interviewing for a job.
- ☐ Make sure you understand health insurance and other possible job benefits.
- ☐ Make sure you understand social security regulations and benefits.
- ☐ Know how to dress for the job you receive.
- ☐ Ask for help in understanding how to maintain a positive relationship with your employer.
- ☐ Ask for specific help once you are working, so you know how to keep your job.

USEFUL NUMBERS

FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS TRAINING INFORMATION

JOB CORPS: Toll-free: (800) 424-2925

Local: _____

CETA PROGRAM: Toll-free (800) 424-2925

Local _____

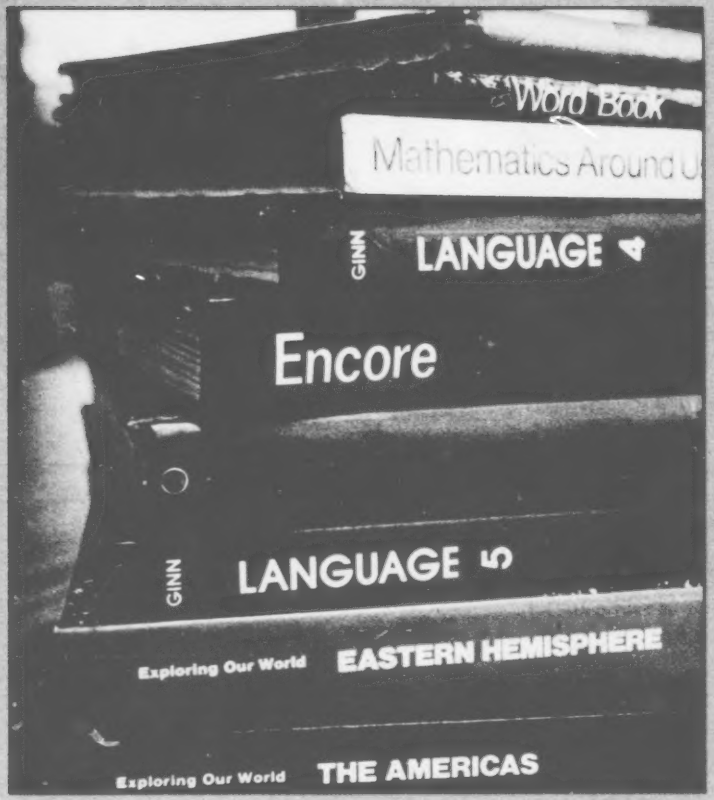
STATE EMPLOYMENT AGENCY _____

ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM _____

COMMUNITY COLLEGE _____

MAA _____

SPONSOR _____



EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES

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BACKGROUND NOTES

Because most refugee cultures place a great deal of importance on education, and because it is seen as an important way to improve one's life, most refugees are very interested in receiving education in the United States. They may be discouraged, however, by the confusion that results from the many differences that exist between American education practices and those more familiar to them.

Education is generally much more widely available here than in the refugees' native countries. In addition to being guaranteed to children, there are many educational opportunities available to adults, such as ESL (English as a Second Language), vocational training, and adult education courses. Many refugee adults are surprised to learn that such opportunities exist, and some may be hesitant to take advantage of them because the idea of being an adult student seems strange to them. They may need a great deal of encouragement to enroll in language classes or other training programs.

All refugees are surprised by American classroom practices. Students are much more involved in America than the refugees' native countries, which typically use lecture or rote memorization methods rather than encouraging questions and discussion by students. The refugees will need help in understanding these practices and becoming more comfortable with them.

Teachers are also viewed differently in their native countries. The refugees are accustomed to according great respect to teachers, perhaps even more than is given to parents; questioning a teacher is unthinkable. They may be shocked to enter an American classroom and see the less formal, more democratic approach to education found in this country.

Enrollment. Because the American school system is much more complicated than those familiar to the refugees, they will not know how to enroll their children or themselves in school. It will help if you can be sure they have the necessary materials (described in this section), help them obtain the services of an interpreter, and perhaps even accompany them to the school. (p. 74)

Evaluation. Report cards are typically not found in the refugees' homeland. Parents may need your help to understand and interpret the report cards. (p. 79)

Role of parents. The refugees accord so much respect to teachers in their homelands that the parents would not dream of approaching a teacher to discuss their child's education or progress. They therefore need help in understanding and adjusting to the U.S. practice in which parents and teachers work closely together in the interest of schoolchildren. (p. 82)

Studying English. Many refugee adults feel awkward going to school, since this is unusual in their own countries. They not only need help in finding and enrolling in language classes, but also need encouragement to attend them. (p. 85)

THE STORY OF MISS L

Mr. L and his family were eager to start their new lives in the United States, and he enrolled his children in school soon after arriving in this country. Mr. L had relatives who helped him find a job at a local factory. Everyone seemed to be adjusting well, except for Mr. L's 30-year old sister. Miss L was working part-time to help the family's income, but she was unhappy at not being able to speak English. How could she improve herself in this new country?

One day at her job she talked with a friend who had lived in the United States for several years. Miss L complained that it was frustrating to always need an interpreter everywhere she went. Her friend asked her why she did not enroll in an ESL (English as a Second Language) class. Miss L thought it was impossible for someone her age to go to school, and that she would be embarrassed if she tried.

Her friend explained that in the U.S., people of all ages and nationalities go to school. Once she had taken an evening class where there were older men and women together from many different countries, and they had to speak English together. Miss L asked her friend to find out if the course was still available, and if so, to help her enroll as soon as possible. Her friend found an afternoon class that would allow Miss L to keep her part-time job and still go to school.

After Miss L had completed the course, her improvement in English made it possible for her to find a better job. She now practices her English regularly, and has enrolled in another course in the hope of improving her educational background.

EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN

Americans believe that everyone — rich and poor, men and women, young and old — should be able to get an education. There are many different kinds of educational opportunities in the United States.

Every child in the U.S. can get twelve years (grades 1-12) of free public education. Education is compulsory. All children are required by law to attend school. This requirement usually affects children from the ages six through sixteen. Parents are responsible for seeing that their child goes to school.

The school your child attends depends on his or her age and where you live. There are basically two levels of education for children between the ages of six and 18. The elementary level begins with the first grade when the child is about six. Usually, this level extends to the eighth grade when the child is about 13. The secondary level begins with the ninth grade when the child is about 14. It continues to the twelfth grade when the child is about 18. The secondary level is what is traditionally called high school. This traditional division into two levels also may be further divided into elementary school (grades 1–3 or 4), middle school (grades 4 or 5–6 or 7), junior high school (grades 6 or 7–8 or 9), and senior high school (grades 9 or 10–12). Students who complete the twelfth grade are awarded a high school diploma. After high school most students go to college or find jobs.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

In addition to the public schools, there are many private schools in the U.S. These schools usually charge money, called tuition or matriculation fees, to attend them. Some fees are quite low, but many are expensive. Many private schools are run by church or religious groups. Parents may send a child to a private school because of religious beliefs, subjects offered, location, family tradition, or even wanting an all-boys or all-girls school.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Physically handicapped or mentally retarded children also have a right to free public education. Many schools have special classes or programs for these children. There may be schools in an area which serve all the children in that area with a particular handicap. This could be a school for the deaf or a school for the blind. Some schools may have programs for those children who are considered "gifted" or beyond normal intelligence or ability. These are sometimes called "accelerated" or "advanced placement" programs.

Ask your sponsor for help in finding out about special programs.

This deaf child receives special help in school

SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN UNDER SIX

Most areas have schools for children who are younger than six, sometimes as young as two. These schools are usually called nursery schools or pre-schools. Some of these schools are private and charge a tuition. Child care programs are sometimes available to take care of children while parents work. In these programs, sometimes referred to as "day care," children are fed, taken care of, and given opportunities to play and learn. They are for children under the age of two and for other young children not enrolled in pre-school. Contact the Department of Human Services nearest you for information on child care programs.

ENROLLING YOUR CHILD IN SCHOOL

It is important that you enroll your child in school as soon as possible. You must first find out which school your child should attend. Ask a friend, your sponsor, or your voluntary agency to help you locate the right school. You also can call the office of the superintendent of schools in your area. This number is listed in the phone book. When you have found the right school, call the school to find out where and when you should come to enroll your child. Find out what documents to bring with you. Documents which you may be required to bring along with your child include:

- I—94
- Any record of your child's age such as a birth or baptismal certificate.
- All of your child's available medical records, or, in some schools, a form completed by your doctor stating that the child has had a physical examination.
- Immunization records
- A document such as a driver's license or a letter that shows you reside in the area served by the school.

If your English is not good, you should bring someone along to interpret for you and help you in completing any enrollment forms.

Children are usually placed at a grade level according to their age. Some schools give tests to children older than six. These are placement tests, not entrance tests. These tests may be used to decide the class in which your child will be placed.

TRANSPORTATION

Some areas have school buses that take the students to and from school. Find out WHERE and at WHAT TIME your child will be picked up and left off. In other areas children may walk to school or use public transportation. Call the school or ask your sponsor to find out the best way to get to school.

MONTHS OF ATTENDANCE

Most schools begin in September and continue until June. From June through August, students have summer vacation. Some schools have summer courses for students to take for fun. Students can also make up work they may have missed during the school year. In addition, schools have short vacations for several holidays during the school year. Traditional school holidays are at Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's, Washington's Birthday, and Easter. Find out which holidays are observed at your child's school.

ND OUT
LD'S SCHOOL

, you should find out about:

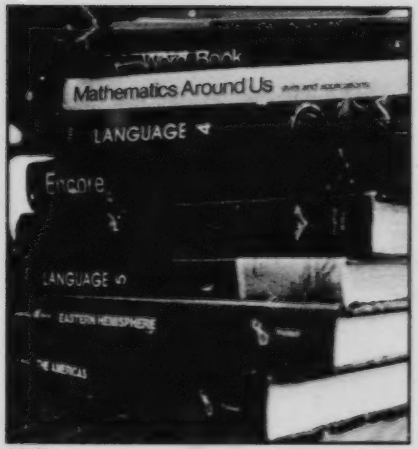
URS OF ATTENDANCE

children attend school for no more than six
a day. Most schools begin some time between
. and 9 a.m. and end between 2:30 p.m. and
. Find out the exact times for your child's
l.

LUNCH

In most schools, students eat in a cafeteria. Students can bring their own food for lunch or they can buy meals in the cafeteria. Lunch programs in most public schools have inexpensive meals. Low-income families are sometimes able to get free lunches and even breakfast for their children at school. Find out if this program is offered at your child's school and if you are eligible to apply for it.

BOOKS



Most public schools lend students the textbooks they will need during the year. The books must be returned to the school at the end of the school year. If a child damages, loses, or does not return a book, the child's parents usually must pay for its replacement.

ESL AND BILINGUAL EDUCATION

Some schools have classes, called ESL (English as a Second Language) classes, to teach English to non-English speaking students. A few schools may have some classes where the native language of the non-English speaking student is used along with English. These programs are called bilingual education programs.

ASPECTS OF THE AMERICAN SCHOOL SYSTEM

SUBJECTS

All public schools in the U.S. offer courses in certain basic areas of study. These usually include reading and writing, mathematics, history, science, and physical education. Most students are required to take certain courses in these areas. Course requirements are determined by the local school board or by the state department of education. For this reason, course requirements may be different from state to state, city to city, or even school to school. This is why some schools may teach subjects which others do not.

The elementary level has mostly required subjects. The secondary level has fewer required subjects and more optional (elective) subjects from which the students choose.

TEACHERS

At the elementary level, usually one teacher teaches all subjects to the class. At the secondary level, different teachers teach each subject. Instead of remaining in a single classroom, the students move to a different room for each different subject and teacher.

STYLES OF LEARNING

Americans believe in "learning by doing." You can see this if you ever sit in an American classroom. Students are encouraged to acquire knowledge actively rather than receiving it passively from a teacher. Usually a teacher does not do all the talking. Instead of giving the students all of the answers, the teacher encourages students to find the answers themselves. The students do this by discussing or even arguing about a subject in class. Or students go to the library to find information on a certain subject in books, magazines, or newspapers. Students are often encouraged to do research and independent assignments either singly or in groups. They are also encouraged to use the library and any available laboratory and technological facilities.

COUNSELORS AND NURSES

Some schools have counselors and nurses. Counselors can help your child select classes or a field of study, and can help solve any problems within the school. A school nurse can provide emergency medical help and may perform routine tests (hearing, vision, etc.) on all the children.

EVALUATION

Students are evaluated in a number of different ways. These evaluations are usually based on attendance, completion of assignments, tests, and participation in class. There are various grading systems used to represent the level of achievement on these report cards. The traditional system uses the letters of the alphabet from A to F. A represents excellence, and F represents failure. Other systems may use scales from 1 to 5, from 1 to 4, from 4 to 0, pass/fail, 0 to 100, or S (satisfactory)/U (unsatisfactory). Some schools may not use a scale but just a written evaluation.

Most schools do not have tests that students must take to pass from one grade to another or from elementary to high school. In some states students must take minimum requirement tests in order to graduate from high school.

Sometimes students are given standardized tests. These are tests given in many schools across the country. They do not determine whether a student passes or fails. These tests serve as a comparison between schools and students in different areas to see how well the schools are teaching and the students are learning.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Americans believe that an education should develop the body as well as the mind. For this reason, sports and physical activity in schools are popular for both boys and girls. Students are encouraged and sometimes required to participate. Participation in sports is a good way for students to get to know their classmates.

Most high schools have about one hour a day of physical education. During this time, students learn about and participate in a variety of sports and physical activities. Boys and girls have separate areas to change into and out of appropriate clothes for sports and to take showers after the physical education period.

SEX EDUCATION

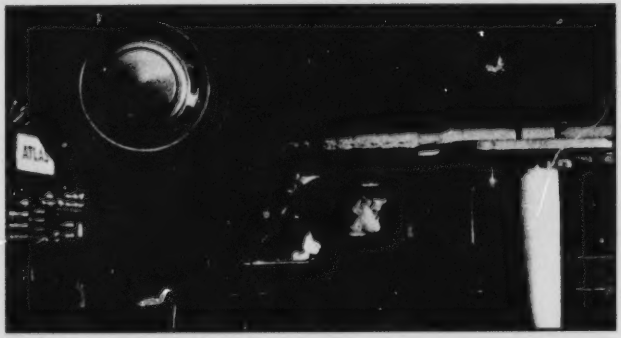
Many schools offer a class that gives information on the human reproduction system. This class usually gives the students information on family planning as well.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

In addition to regular school day activities, most schools offer a range of sports and clubs after school. These may include such things as basketball, football, baseball, volleyball, drama, debate, language clubs, school newspapers or magazines, art club, and so on. Some of the clubs may be vocationally related.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Many schools offer courses in vocational areas such as auto mechanics, shop and carpentry, home economics, agriculture, and clerical or secretarial skills. Frequently, students who plan to go to work immediately after high school will take these courses to develop job skills. However, the subjects are usually offered as electives to all students in a school.

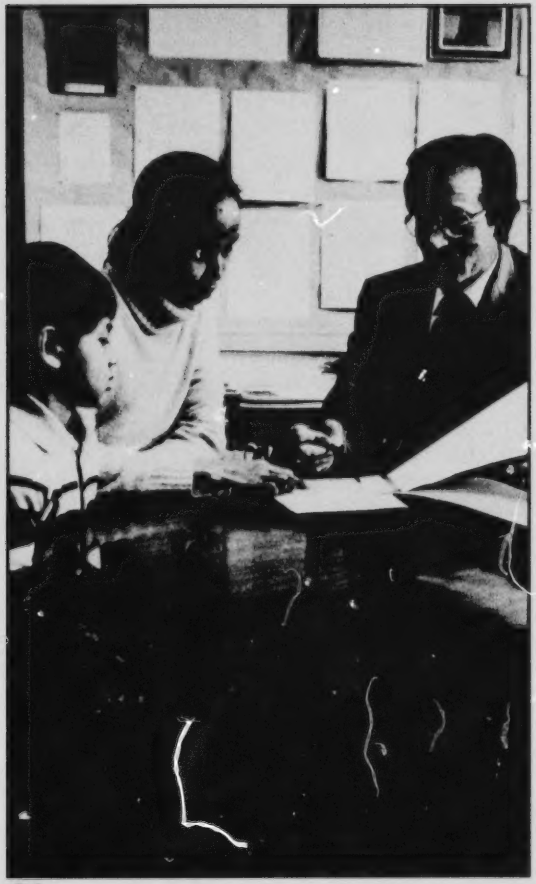


CONDUCT IN SCHOOL

Students are expected to attend all classes in which they are enrolled. If a student is absent from school or arrives late, parents are usually required to send a written note to the school explaining the student's absence or lateness. In addition to work in class, students are expected to complete all assigned homework on time. Students who are late to class without a written excuse or who are late in completing assignments are usually disciplined or punished.

The discipline or punishment may vary. It could consist of additional work, of having to remain after school when the other students have left, of being denied permission to participate in certain activities, or of being scolded by the principal or other school official. Physical punishment is not permitted in most public schools in the U.S. Some private schools, however, may still use it.

Students are expected to work, learn, and take tests independently. Sharing answers or looking at another student's paper is considered dishonesty and cheating, unless the student is following the directions of the teacher in doing so. Students are expected to do their own original work. It is considered dishonest to copy from a book when writing a paper or assignment unless you give a proper reference. Dishonesty and cheating are usually punished quite severely.



THE ROLE OF PARENTS

Americans believe that parents should play an active role in the formal education of their children. Parents are occasionally invited to observe their children in school and to discuss their children's progress with the teacher. Some schools schedule regular parent/teacher conferences several times a year to do this. A teacher sometimes calls parents to discuss how their child is doing. Parents may want to take an interpreter with them. These are good opportunities for you to meet your child's teachers and to learn something about the school system in the U.S.

Schools usually send report cards home which tell parents how their children are doing in school. Parents may be asked to sign these. In addition, parents will be asked to sign a form giving their permission for their children to go on special trips (field trips) sponsored by the school.

Most schools also have a Parent-Teacher Association (P.T.A). At regularly scheduled meetings, parents and teachers may discuss school programs and policies, ways of improving education at the school, and a variety of other topics.

WORKING AND ATTENDING SCHOOL

Many students also work while they are in school. Jobs for students include newspaper delivery, yard work, babysitting, working in a supermarket or fast food restaurant. This work is usually done before or after regular school hours and on weekends. During summer months, when students are on vacation, many work full-time jobs.

GENERAL EQUIVALENCY DIPLOMAS (GED)

Adults who have not finished high school can attend special classes, even while they are working, and take a test to get their GED. This is generally accepted as the equivalent of a high school diploma.

DEKON

BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL

Free public education usually ends with high school. After completing high school, a student may decide to work or to attend a college or a vocational/technical school. Things to keep in mind about study after high school:

- Education after high school is not free and may be very expensive. There are ways to get financial aid.
- American education is quite flexible. You can work first and go to college later, or you can do both at the same time. Also, you can go to one college first and transfer to another later.
- Colleges and universities may be privately owned and run, or they may be owned and run by the county or state in which they are located.
- Almost all colleges and universities give a special English test to foreign students. Only students with an advanced knowledge of English can expect to pass this test.

High school students can get information about opportunities after high school from the school guidance counselor. This is a person trained to help students decide what they want to do and where and how they can do it.

EDUCATION FOR ADULTS

Most Americans believe you are never too old to go to school. They respect adults who continue their education. Adults often go to school part-time at the same time they are working. Some people take a class that will help them get a better job. Others take a class only out of interest.

STUDYING ENGLISH

Now that you are in the U.S. you will probably want to study English. Most areas of the U.S. have places where non-English speaking adults can learn English. Some are free; others charge tuition. You can study English even while you are working. The practice you get in using your English on the job will be very helpful.

- **INDOCHINESE PROGRAMS** — Some areas of the U.S. have special programs that offer English classes for Indochinese refugees.
- **VOLUNTARY AGENCIES** — VOLAGS sometimes provide ESL classes for refugees. Contact the voluntary agency nearest you.
- **CHURCHES** — Churches and other religious groups involved in refugee resettlement sometimes offer ESL classes.
- **INDOCHINESE MUTUAL ASSISTANCE ASSOCIATIONS** — MAAs sometimes offer ESL instruction.
- **ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS** — Most areas of the U.S. have these programs. Many of the programs offer English classes for non-native speakers of English. These programs are often held at night in a local high school. The tuition is usually quite low.
- **COMMUNITY COLLEGES** — These often offer ESL for more advanced students. They charge tuition, which varies in amount. You may be eligible for a Basic Education Opportunity Grant (BEOG), a scholarship given to low-income students.
- **COMMERCIAL LANGUAGE SCHOOLS** — These offer ESL classes but they are usually quite expensive.

JOB SKILLS TRAINING

Many refugees have skills that may not be directly applicable to this country. Many places in the U.S. have training programs that teach usable job skills such as typing, auto mechanics, cooking, carpentry, and plumbing. Some of these programs are funded by the government out of tax money. They may be free or may even provide a small stipend. Sources of information on such programs include:

- State/local employment agency
- Indochinese refugee assistance programs
- VOLAG or resettlement agency
- Mutual Assistance Association (MAA)
- CETA Program [See EMPLOYMENT section]
- Job Corps (for youths between age 16–21) [see EMPLOYMENT section] For information call toll-free 800-434-2929.
- Private training schools

You may also find job skills training at community colleges and adult education programs. These programs usually charge a tuition. The amount of tuition will vary. Refugees attending a community college are sometimes eligible for a Basic Educational Opportunity Grant (BEOG).

CHECKLIST

- ☐ Have your children immunized and keep the records for purposes of school enrollment.
- ☐ Enroll your school-age children in school.
- ☐ Arrange for English language instruction for those in your family who will not be in school full-time.
- ☐ Learn about the American education system, grade levels, types of schools, etc.
- ☐ Talk to your sponsor and countrymen about principles of American education and how it differs from education in your own country.
- ☐ Find out what English language resources are available to you.
- ☐ Learn how approaches to child care in this country are different to those you are accustomed to.

YOUR HOME IN THE UNITED STATES

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BACKGROUND NOTES

Probably the most immediate need of a newly-arrived refugee is housing. In most cases the sponsor, VOLAG representative or other concerned individuals have arranged temporary facilities, but the refugee has little time before more permanent arrangements must be made.

Selecting a new home and moving in is difficult for anyone. Imagine the difficulty a refugee faces. In addition to learning what kinds of housing are available (which may be different from what they had in the past), the refugees must learn about such things as leases, deposits, whether utilities are included, how to pay bills, etc.

Once in a home, the refugee may be faced with a variety of appliances that are unfamiliar and possibly very dangerous.

As a result, the refugees will need considerable help before they can be comfortable even in their own homes.

Kitchen. While the refugees will need considerable help in understanding the use of the appliances—some of which they may never have heard before—the first concern is safety. Imagine trying to figure out a gas stove if you have always cooked with charcoal in the past. Take nothing for granted; once you've shown how to turn on the stove, show how to turn it off, and make sure the refugee knows it must be turned off. Demonstrate how to use the garbage disposal, emphasizing the need to keep hands out of it. Be sure the refugee knows that the cleaners in the kitchen and bathroom are not to be eaten. This is the best opportunity to avoid the kind of tragedy that has happened to an unfortunate number of refugees. (p. 95)

Bathroom. As with the kitchen, remember to teach basic safety principles: avoiding hot water, caution in bathing infants, not using electric appliances in the bathtub, etc. All this may be new to them. (pp. 97-98)

Looking for a home. Finding an adequate home within the typical refugee's tight budget is difficult. They will need particular help in some of the details, the questions that Americans automatically ask: Is a lease necessary? Are utilities included in the rent? Who is responsible for the repair of appliances? Most refugees have never had to be concerned with such matters and will have to learn "from scratch." (p. 101)

Temperature. Most refugees have never before had central heating or air conditioning and will need help learning to how to use thermostats, vents, etc. Almost as important, the refugee will have to learn when not to use heating or air conditioning in order to save money on utility bills. (p. 107)

Keeping Your Home Secure. An unfortunate new experience for many refugees is crime. Many have never needed to protect their home from burglars and will not at first understand the need to keep the house locked, avoid walking alone at night, etc. It is important to introduce them to these hazards and teach them how to protect themselves. (p. 110)

THE STORY OF MR. H

Mr. H and his wife have lived in the United States for several years. Recently Mr. H's brother and family arrived from a camp in Southeast Asia. It was a happy reunion for the brothers, but they were immediately faced with a problem. Where would they live? Mr. H lived in a one-bedroom apartment. His brother had a family of four, and the landlord would not allow that many people to live in the apartment. They decided to spend the weekend looking for a suitable place.

Mr. H took them around the residential neighborhoods, applying everywhere they saw a vacancy sign. He also checked the newspaper ads for reasonably priced apartments. Finally, he called and made an appointment to see a two-bedroom place the next day.

Before they looked at the apartment, they explored the neighborhood and found out about local transportation routes, shopping and the closest public school. Then they looked at the apartment and wrote down things they would need for it, such as a carpet for the floor. The landlord was willing to rent the apartment to them on the condition that Mr. H would co-sign the lease, since his brother had just arrived and had only a part-time job. The landlord also required one month's rent in advance, plus another payment for a security deposit.

A week later, the landlord called Mr. H to tell him that after his brother's family had celebrated a reunion party, the neighbors complained of the noise. The neighbors had also complained about a water leak which had persisted since the new family arrived, and which was damaging their apartment below. Mr. H immediately called the maintenance office for his brother's apartment and told them about the leak. He then sat down with his brother and translated every section of the lease. His brother was relieved to find out more about the rules of renting and maintaining a city apartment.

APARTMENT

In cities people usually live in apartments. In a building, there may be as few as two apartments or as many as two hundred. It is customary in the U.S. for one family to live in one apartment. It may be one room with a kitchen and bathroom or it may have as many as three or four rooms. The apartments in a building share the entrance way from outside. Each apartment is entered through its own door from the common entrance way or hall.

SEMI-ATTACHED HOUSE (Townhouse or Rowhouse)

A semi-attached house is a building that shares one or more walls with buildings built next to it. It has its own entrance from outside and is usually occupied by a single family. Often it will have two or more stories, a basement and possibly both a front and back door.

HOUSE

A house is usually a solitary building with a yard around it. It has at least one and sometimes more than one entrance from outside. It may have one or more stories and it is usually occupied by a single family. To save money, sometimes more than one family will share a house

IN AND AROUND THE HOME

Most homes, whether apartments or houses, have different rooms for different purposes. Most places will have at least a kitchen or cooking area and a bathroom. Depending upon the size of your home, there may be additional rooms. These other rooms are usually used for different purposes, such as sleeping, eating, entertaining, etc.

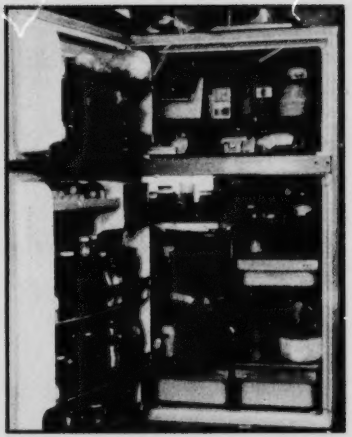
KITCHEN

The kitchen is the room used for cooking. It usually contains a sink, a stove, a refrigerator, and storage areas.

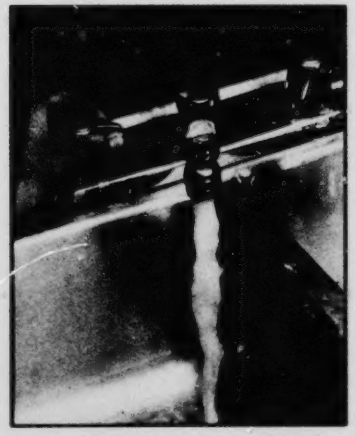
Most STOVES work on electricity or gas. You should know how to operate the stove properly and safely so as not to cause harm or accidents. Ask someone to show you the proper way to use the stove.

Learning to Use the Stove

Refrigerator



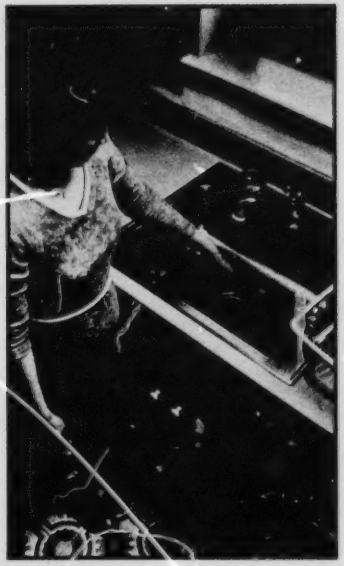
The REFRIGERATOR is used to keep foods cold and fresh. The door of the refrigerator must be shut. Otherwise the refrigerator may break down and the food will spoil. Food in cans and dry food such as rice should be kept in cabinets or other storage areas in the kitchen.



96 **Turning on the Water**

The SINK has hot and cold running water. Be careful with the hot water—it can burn. Have someone show you how to use the faucets if you don't know how. Some are confusing, even to Americans. Dishes and cooking utensils are washed in the sink. Dirty water is all that should go down the drain. Grease or food scraps will cause the sink to break down and it may be expensive to fix.

Garbage Disposal



Your sink may have a GARBAGE DISPOSAL. This grinds up food scraps so that they don't have to be put into the trash. Be careful not to put metal objects or bones in the disposal. Never put your hand in the garbage disposal — ask how to use it properly.

Sometimes a kitchen may also have a DISHWASHER. This is a machine that washes pots, pans and utensils. If there is one in your home, ASK HOW TO USE IT. Some kitchens are large enough to have a table and chairs so you can sit and eat. In some homes there may be a special eating area called the dining room or dining area.

BATHROOM

The bathroom is where you use the toilet, wash and clean yourself. Bathrooms usually have a toilet, a sink and a bathtub or a shower.

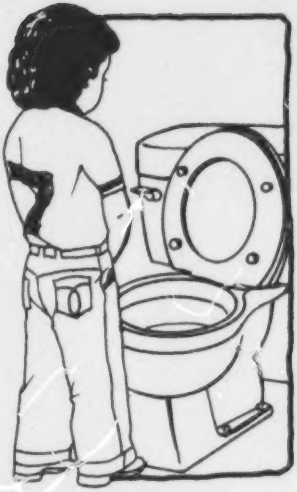
Bathtub and Sink

Ask someone to show you how to use the faucets in the sink, tub and shower.

Showers usually have a door or curtain to keep water inside the tub or shower stall. These must be closed properly, otherwise water will spill on the floor. If this happens, water can go into an apartment or room below. This will cause damage to the building, for which you will be liable.

Sink

Toilet



American toilets are designed to be used in a seated position. Usually the seat is kept down; however, men lift up the seat and stand facing the toilet to urinate.

Do not stand or squat on the toilet since it may break. Toilets may be flushed in different ways. Ask how to flush your toilet properly if you don't know how. Only human waste and toilet paper should be flushed down the toilet. Hair, sanitary napkins, tampons, cigarettes or anything else should not be put in the toilet. These will clog the pipes, stopping up the toilet and flooding the room.

LIVING ROOM

The living room is for family recreation and entertaining guests. Sometimes it may be used as a place to sleep.

BEDROOMS

Your home may have one or more bedrooms. In American families, parents sleep in one bedroom, apart from the children. Children often share a bedroom, though sometimes each child may have one to him/herself.

Furnishings

Basic furnishings found in an American home usually consist of:

- table and chairs for eating;
- beds for sleeping;
- closets, cabinets, dressers for storage;
- sofa (couch) and chairs for relaxing;
- rugs or carpets for covering the floor;
- curtains or drapes or venetian blinds on the windows, for insulation and privacy.

When you move into your new apartment or house, your sponsors or friends may give you some furniture or basic items (such as cooking utensils, dishes, etc.). If you need furniture you can save money by buying it secondhand. In some places there are secondhand or thrift stores such as Salvation Army or Goodwill Industries. Also, there are moving sales or garage sales where people sell furniture or household items that they no longer need. Ask your sponsor or a friend about these. Often you can buy good quality things at a reasonable price. Rugs and carpets may also be bought secondhand. Besides being decorative, these help to keep the noise level down and to keep the home warm. Curtains, drapes or blinds likewise serve various purposes other than decoration. They create privacy and keep the house warmer or cooler.

100

OUTSIDE THE HOME

If you live in a house you may have a yard where it may be possible to plant a garden. Ask the landlord first. Certain local laws may determine what you can do in the yard, such as putting up or taking down a fence, planting or cutting down trees, painting the house certain colors or changing the outside of the house. If you live in an apartment, there may be storage areas in another part of the building. There may also be a play area or other facilities. Sometimes these are indicated in the lease. Ask the landlord or resident manager to explain what is available and how the facilities can be used.

In some places, housing is more difficult to find than others. There are various ways to look for a place to live:

- Talking to your sponsor or friends;
- Checking classified ads in newspapers;
- Walking around the neighborhood looking for signs indicating housing "FOR RENT";
- Going to the office that manages an apartment building to see if any vacancies exist.

As you are looking at apartments or houses, there are some things you should consider before you decide to rent:

- How much can you afford to pay for housing?
- Are there extra charges for utilities or are they included in the rental charge?
- How much is the rent?
- Is there a deposit? If so, how much?

Size:

- How many people are allowed to live in the apartment or house?

Community Resources:

- Is there public transportation close by?
- Are there stores nearby?
- Where are schools located?
- Is it easy to get to the place where you work?
- What other resources are available that you feel are important?

While deciding whether or not to take a place, LOOK AROUND INSIDE to see what kind of condition it's in.

- Do appliances and utilities (refrigerator, stove, lights, plumbing) work properly?
- Do windows and doors open, close and lock properly?
- Are the floors, walls and ceilings in good condition?

LEASE

When you decide to rent, you may be asked to sign a lease. This is an agreement between you and the landlord. You are allowed to live in the house or apartment in exchange for paying a certain amount of money and following rules listed in the lease. Before signing the lease be certain to understand what it says and what it means. If necessary, ask your sponsor or a friend to explain it to you.

A lease is binding, usually for a one-year period. If you break the agreement by moving away before the lease expires, you usually must pay a penalty. A lease may limit the number of people who may live in the residence. You may be evicted if more people move in.

When you sign the lease you are usually asked to pay the first month's rent in advance along with a deposit. This is sometimes called a security or a security deposit. This is an amount of money which the landlord holds in the event that there is damage to the house or apartment. Also, when you move out, if certain repairs need to be made as a result of your living there, the cost of the repairs will be deducted from the security deposit. So you don't get charged for previous damages, check the apartment carefully and tell the landlord before you sign a lease.

PAYING FOR YOUR HOUSING

Usually the rent must be paid once a month on the first day of the month. When you sign your lease, be sure to find out how and to whom the rent should be paid. The lease will usually give you the date by which you must pay. If you fail to pay or if you often pay late, you would be breaking the lease and the landlord could have you evicted.

When you sign the lease you should find out about other expenses you may need to pay that are not included in the rent payment. The lease will list utilities (for example, heating, hot water, electricity, gas) which are included in the rent payment and those which may have to be paid for separately. If there are utilities that must be paid for separately, you will probably receive a bill directly from the company that provides the service or utility. If the bill is not paid promptly, the company can turn off the electricity. The one utility never included in the rent payment is the telephone. Find out from your landlord which utilities you may have to pay separately. If you don't know how to pay the utilities, ask your sponsor, a friend or your landlord to explain it to you.

Cosigners

If you are unemployed or do not earn much money, the landlord may require a cosigner for the lease. The cosigner is a person who accepts responsibility for making sure you have enough money to pay the rent.

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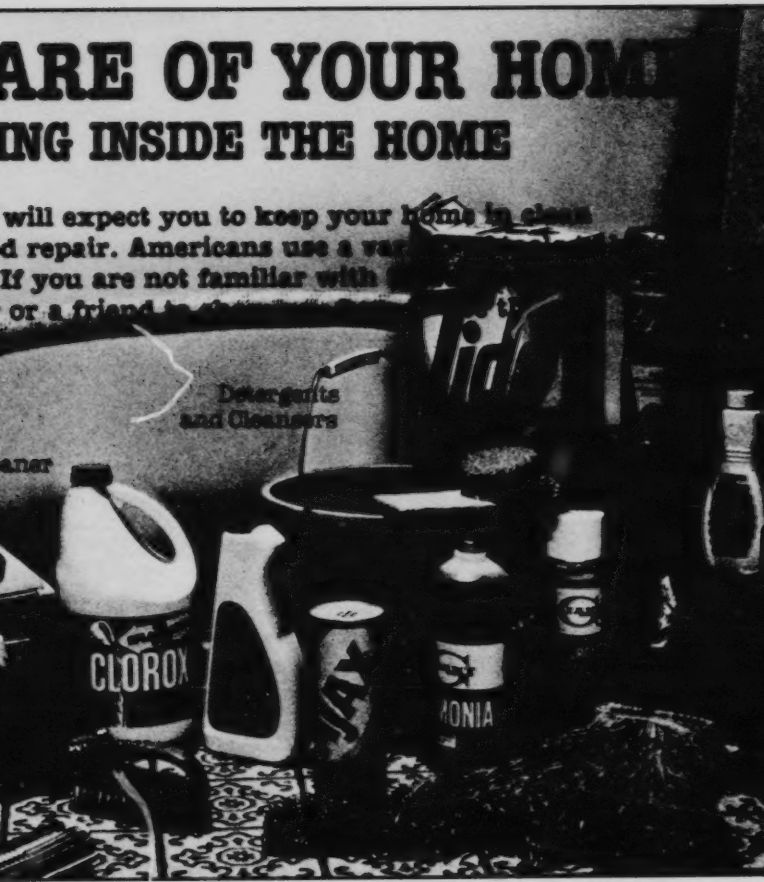
ARE OF YOUR HOM
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If you are not familiar with
or a friend
Detergents
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Sponge Mop

Sponges and Brushes

A sponge or a brush is sometimes used with water and a soap, detergent or cleanser for cleaning things such as sinks, kitchen counters, bathtubs or showers.

Mops

A mop is used to wash the floors, usually with soap or a detergent and water. In the U.S., floors are never washed by throwing buckets of water on them. This damages the building. Also, wood floors should not be cleaned by washing with water since this may damage them.

Brooms

Brooms are used for sweeping dust or dirt from a floor. After using a broom, sweep the dust and dirt into a dust pan and then empty the dust pan into a trash can. Never sweep dirt into hallways, onto the sidewalk, off a balcony or into any other public area.

Detergents and Cleansers

For washing floors and different parts inside the house there are a variety of products available. These are made with chemicals used for cleaning dirt, grease and dust easily from floors, walls and other parts of the house. Some of the chemicals in detergents and cleansers are strong and can damage some furniture or cloth. If used on the skin, hair or other parts of the body, they can be very harmful. They can also be harmful if they are mixed together. There are many different kinds of detergents and cleansers. Because of this, it may be difficult to choose one at the store. Your sponsor, a friend or a salesperson in the store can help you choose if you explain what you want to clean.

Vacuum Cleaner

A vacuum cleaner is a machine that uses suction to clean up dirt and dust. Not everyone has a vacuum cleaner. They are useful for cleaning small particles of dirt and dust from rugs, carpets, floors, drapes and sometimes even furniture.

For washing clothes, towels, and linens, Americ
use a washing machine. Sometimes a house or a
ment building will have a
washing machine available.
In a house, the washing
machine is sometimes found
in the basement or near the
kitchen. In an apartment
building there may be a
separate area (laundry room)
in the building where there
are several machines that
are usually coin or token
operated.

For drying laundry, a
machine called a dryer may
be used, or the laundry
may be hung from an appropriate place. Some h
have clotheslines for drying laundry in the yard
Apartment buildings may also have lines for dry
laundry. It may be necessary to buy a drying ra

Washer and Dryer

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put in the bathtub. Clothes should not be hung on the balcony of an apartment, on benches, trees or fences around the house or apartment building.

If there is no washer or dryer in your home you may have to take your dirty laundry to a laundromat to be washed. This is a business where you can find coin-operated washers and dryers for public use. If you do not know how to use a washer or dryer ask your sponsor or a friend to show you how. It is easy to ruin clothes or damage the machines if you don't know how to use them properly. If you use a sink or tub for doing laundry, the clothes should be scrubbed only by hand. Never put rocks or other hard objects in the tub or sink since this will damage them.

Not all clothes can be washed and dried in a machine. Some should be washed gently by hand; others should be professionally dry cleaned. Be sure to look at the label inside of the clothing to see if it can be washed and dried in a machine. If there is no label or if you are not sure, ask for advice from your sponsor or a friend.

DISPOSING OF GARBAGE AND TRASH

In most apartment buildings, there is a room or place where trash can be placed where it will be removed by a trash or sanitation service. Sometimes there will be a trash chute where garbage is thrown. Frequently, it is necessary to keep cans, bottles and paper trash separate from other garbage like food scraps and dirt from cleaning the house. Ask your landlord if you should keep the different types of garbage separate. In a house and even in some smaller apartment buildings it may be necessary to put the trash in a garbage can or container outside near the street where it can be picked up by a disposal or sanitation service. Depending upon where you live, you may have to pay for trash pick-up or it may be included in the rent payment. Check with your landlord about this.

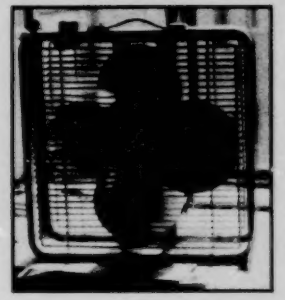
Any garbage or trash around the home should be placed in a bag or container which must be covered or closed to stop unpleasant odors, and keep insects mice, rats or other animals from getting into it. Large quantities of trash should not be kept in the home. In some places local laws or the rules of the disposal service may require you to use a certain kind of container or plastic trash bags.

TEMPERATURE IN THE HOUSE

Homes in the U.S. usually have the temperature inside controlled automatically by machines. It is necessary to know how to adjust the temperature. Sometimes the landlord controls the temperature from a central location.

In many apartments and houses there may be a separate control called a thermostat. Homes usually have a furnace or a heater to keep the inside warm in cooler weather. There may be an air conditioner to keep the inside cool in hot weather. When a furnace, heater or air conditioner are working, all doors and windows should be kept closed. To save energy the temperature should be moderate. If the furnace or air conditioner is set too high, it will be expensive. Even if utilities are included in your rent, high heating or air conditioning bills may cause the landlord to increase the rent you will have to pay. In cooler weather instead of turning the furnace or heater too high, it is usually better to put on a sweater or other warm clothes in the house. The U.S. government recommends that the thermostat in the winter should be adjusted to about 65° F (18.3° C). If there are young children or older people in the home, it is advisable to turn up the thermostat a little more (70° F/21° C) since cold temperatures may cause health problems for them — even death.

thermostat

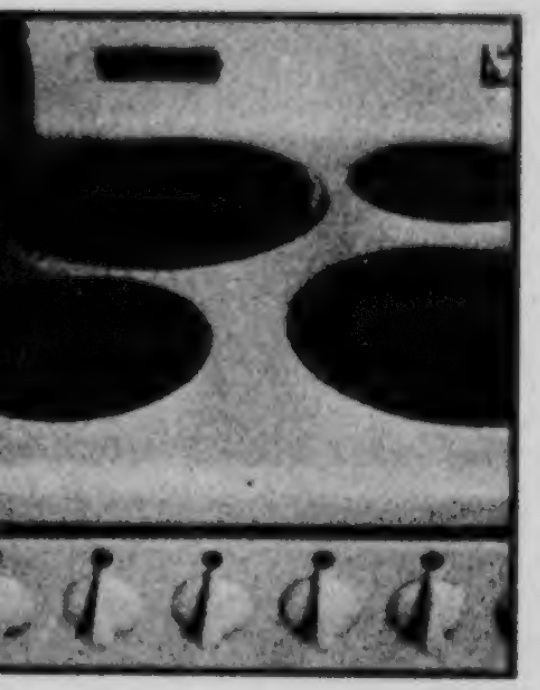


In hot weather, if there is an air conditioner, the U.S. government recommends setting the thermostat at 78° F (25.5° C). If there is no air conditioner, electric fans are available to help keep the inside of the house cool. Some fans are made to fit in an open window, others for standing on the floor or on a table. If you are going to use a fan and you don't know how it works, ask your sponsor or a friend to show you. It is very easy to hurt yourself if you don't know how to use it properly.

Most American homes have a variety of appliances and machines used in cooking, cleaning, leisure activities, etc. Most of these use electricity to operate. When you use something that runs on electricity be very careful to know how to use it properly.

Never use an electrical appliance near water. Electricity can be very dangerous. If you have an electric stove in the kitchen, be careful about spilling liquids near the stove. Children should not play with things that use electricity unless they are taught how to use these things safely. If an electrical appliance doesn't work don't try to fix it yourself.

Some stoves, heaters and furnaces use natural gas or oil to work. You must be careful about lighting matches or using flame near an appliance which uses gas or oil. It may cause a fire or an explosion. Also, breathing the gas is dangerous — often fatal. Know how to use gas appliances safely and properly.



NEIGHBORLY CONSIDERATIONS

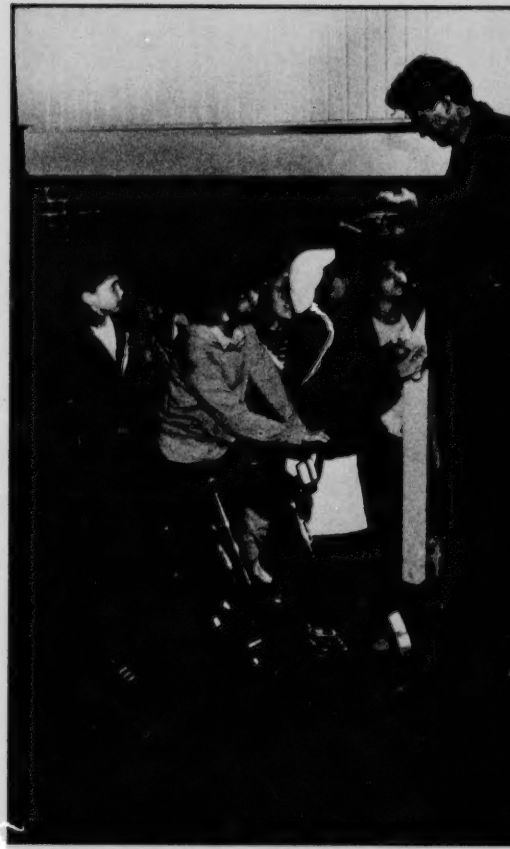
There are some things you should keep in mind to get along well with your neighbors. Many Americans do not like to be disturbed at night when they usually rest. Loud music, yelling or loud talking and other noisy activities can be disturbing at these times. There may be certain places around your home where children are not allowed to play. Many apartment buildings and neighborhoods have parks or playgrounds nearby. Children should not be allowed to play in parking lots or in the street. If you are not sure about the best places for children to play, ask your sponsor, a friend or your landlord.

If you are responsible for taking care of the outside of your house, you should keep the grass trimmed and neat and the yard free of trash.

When you cook, you should make sure the kitchen is well ventilated. Smoke or food with unpleasant odors may be annoying to your neighbors.

When you cook, you should make sure the kitchen is well ventilated. Smoke or food with unpleasant odors may be annoying to your neighbors.

Avoid walking on your neighbor's lawn, and always ask before picking your neighbor's flowers, fruit or vegetables.

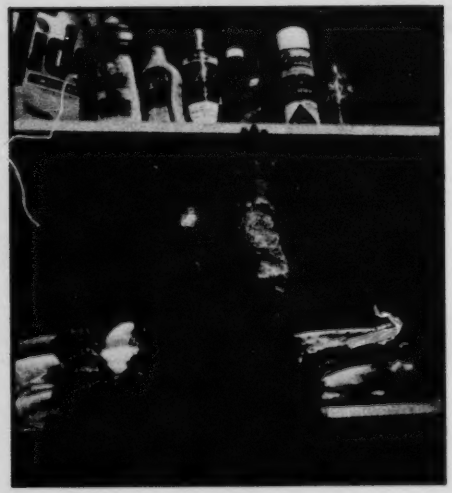


KEEPING YOUR HOME SECURE

Check to see that the doors and windows in your home can be closed and locked. This is especially important in urban areas where there are many people living close together. If you live in an area where many people are strangers, it is important to keep doors and windows secure since crimes do occur. Thieves and criminals are always looking for someone who has been careless. This makes crime easy.

When strangers come to your home, find out who they are and what they want before you open the door to let them in. If you have any doubt about who they are, ask to see their identification. To make it easier to see who is at your door, your home may have a peephole in the door or a chain that permits you to open the door part way without letting someone in.

If you leave your home, lock the doors and windows. If you leave for more than a day ask a friend or neighbor to check up on your home from time to time to make sure things are all right. Keep the keys to your home in a safe place. Always carry a set with you when you leave so that you can let yourself in and out. It is a good idea to give a set of keys to your sponsor, a friend or someone you trust — in case you lose your keys or accidentally lock them in the house.



Cleaning Supplies

- Store cleaning supplies in closed containers out of the reach of small children. Most cleaning products are poisonous.
- Never mix cleaning products since dangerous fumes can be released.

- Keep appliances out of the reach of small children.
- Don't plug too many appliances into one socket.

Electricity

- Never use an electrical appliance that is not in good repair.
- Never use electrical appliances near water.
- Keep appliances out of the reach of small children.

Fire

- If you smoke, use an ashtray. Don't throw cigarettes or matches or cigarette ash on the floor or carpet. Be sure cigarettes and matches are cold before throwing them in a trash can.
- Never smoke in bed or near flammable substances such as gasoline, natural gas, some cleaning fluids.
- Never leave irons, toasters or heat-up appliances turned on if you leave the room.
- If you go away from your home, even for a short time, turn off all appliances except for the refrigerator. The stove, if it runs by electricity, can be left plugged in, but all burners should be turned off.
- Don't store gasoline or flammable substances inside your home.
- Never have an open fire in the house. If there is a fireplace, use a fire screen.
- Never burn charcoal sold for barbequeing inside the house. If your house or apartment does not have smoke alarms you should install one. In some places they are required by law.
- If a fire ever happens, use fire exits or a stairway to get out of a building. Never use an elevator. Learn the fastest way to get out of your home.

CHECKLIST

- ☐ Know how to keep a house clean, including proper use of household cleaners.
- ☐ Know what furniture and utensils you need and where to get them inexpensively.
- ☐ Learn how to use household appliances.
- ☐ Understand housing safety, including the safe use of cooking appliances, garbage disposal, heating, etc.
- ☐ Know how to store food to prevent spoilage.
- ☐ Know how to leave the house quickly in case of fire or other emergency.
- ☐ Keep a list of whom to contact in case of emergency.
- ☐ Be sure you know how to lock doors and windows.
- ☐ Leave a spare key with your sponsor, friend, or neighbor.

EMERGENCIES AROUND THE HOME

Since accidents sometimes occur, be prepared! Have these emergency phone numbers ready near the telephone:

SPONSOR _____

NEIGHBOR _____
(or friend)

FIRE DEPARTMENT _____

POLICE _____

DOCTOR _____

POISON CONTROL _____

INTERPRETER _____
(if you don't know English well)

LANDLORD _____
(or apartment manager)

CHILDREN'S SCHOOLS _____

PARENTS _____
(at work)

Be prepared to give the following information:

My name is _____

My address is _____

My phone number is _____

My sponsor's _____

My sponsor's (or friend's) name is _____

My sponsor's (or friend's) address is _____

My sponsor's (or friend's) phone number is _____

FOOD COUPON
1

IN THIS SECTION:

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BACKGROUND NOTES

Many refugees come to the United States with confusion and misunderstanding about the community services that will be available to them. Because such programs do not exist in many of their native lands, some will have no idea that such help is available. They are accustomed to the extended family's providing any necessary assistance.

Others may have heard that welfare is available to everyone—that the government, for example, will buy them a car and a house. It is important for the refugees to read this section closely and for you to help them have a more realistic understanding of what is and is not available to them. It is important to try to strike a balance between encouraging the refugees to become self-sufficient as soon as possible and the fact that many are genuinely in need of some services.

Because refugees typically have so many misconceptions regarding services, they will need your help to determine what they are eligible for and how to apply for services. Remember that the refugees probably have no experience with filling out forms, interviewing for assistance, etc.

Medical. Many routine American medical practices will be frightening to the refugees, who may never have had blood drawn, an examination by a doctor of the opposite sex, a urinalysis, etc. Other refugees may expect an injection rather than other forms of treatment, since that is what they are used to having whenever they went to a doctor in their native country. It is helpful to have an interpreter available during examinations to answer the questions the refugees are likely to have (pp. 121-122)

VOLAGs and MAAs. The handbook describes the functions of VOLAGs and Mutual Assistance Associations (MAAs). Before the refugees arrive, it is a good idea to find out how to contact these agencies and help the refugees get in touch with them shortly after they arrive. (p. 136)

THE STORY OF MR. T

Mr. T, his wife, and their two children arrived in the United States in February, 1980. Like most refugees, Mr. T had no money when he arrived, so his sponsor, Mrs. S, helped him find a job. She took Mr. T to the state employment agency, where they found out about a part-time job opening as a dishwasher at a small restaurant.

Mrs. S also helped Mr. and Mrs. T enroll in an English class. Their older child was enrolled in the primary school, and the younger child was put in a day care center.

Mr. T's job did not provide medical benefits, and his wife needed medical attention. He asked his sponsor how he could pay for the medical bills. Mrs. S took him to the local social service (welfare) office, where he was told that he could apply for medical assistance from the government. It was explained to Mr. T that the state required a month to evaluate his application before he would be told whether he qualified to receive medical assistance.

A month later, Mr. T was told that he did qualify under the government's regulations. He was given a special card to use whenever he went to a doctor or hospital or clinic, showing that his medical costs were covered by the assistance program. He was also told that his case would be reviewed after six months, because this kind of assistance was only temporary, until Mr. T and his family could become self-sufficient.

Mr. T was relieved at being able to receive this government help for a while, and his wife was able to go to the public health clinic and receive treatment for her illness.

Temporary assistance is available to people who may not have enough money to pay for food, rent, or medical bills. It continues until they can pay for these expenses themselves. However, this assistance is designed to be a temporary measure to protect the family until they can support themselves. Refugees, like Americans, are expected to be self-sufficient.

Talking with a social worker

If you go to the offices of social service programs, you will be helped by people called social workers. Some social workers, such as eligibility workers, determine whether you qualify for services. They will also decide which services best meet your needs. Other social workers, such as mental health counselors, case workers, and public health nurses, can advise you on getting help for personal or medical problems. A job counselor at the employment office can advise you about finding work. Some programs have workers who may contact you regarding services.

Most assistance comes from the federal, state, and local governments. It is paid for from taxes collected by the governments. Each state has its own rules about who is eligible for assistance and how much they receive. Your state may have a combination of these assistance programs:

- medical
- food
- cash
- employment
- housing
- education
- legal

Most of these programs are available in your area and for specific information, refer to the end of this section.

MEDICAL PROGRAMS

Basic services such as immunization shots or tests for tuberculosis or venereal disease are available to everyone at little or no cost. Medical assistance is a program that helps the elderly or low-income families pay certain costs such as doctors' fees, hospital bills, and medicines.

Depending on what type of assistance you receive, you may be given a medical card to use in obtaining additional services such as optical care, dental, lab treatment, and x-rays.

Each state has its own process for deciding who can receive medical assistance. If you need medical assistance, you should apply for it immediately. Processing the application often takes a long time.

Additional services may be available for particular groups of people:

- Maternal and child health service includes general and dental health care for children and general and nutritional health care for nursing and pregnant women.

- Disabled persons service includes diagnosis for chronic disease or disability in which treatment may follow.
- Family planning includes counseling for families who want to plan when they should have children and how many.
- Mental health services include counseling for people who have social adjustment problems or problems with alcohol or drug addiction.

Things to know about medical services and assistance:

- Bring all records or documents concerning your health history when applying for assistance.
- Keep your doctor's or clinic's address and phone number with you at all times.
- Keep records of vaccinations for children and family in a safe place. If lost, they must receive all shots again.
- You will need your medical card each time you or your family goes to a clinic to receive medical services. Keep it with you at all times, so that you can receive services in case of accident or other emergency.
- Show your medical card when obtaining prescription medicine. You may be able to buy it at a lower cost.

You might not receive assistance immediately after applying for the program you need. It may take one month before you are considered eligible to receive either stamps or food supplements. People who do not have any cash at all can apply for an emergency program. They usually receive assistance in about three days.

The most common food programs are:

FOOD STAMPS

Food stamps are coupons used to buy food. To receive this assistance, you must have a kitchen in your home. If you qualify for assistance, you will receive an identification card and the food stamp booklet.

- Usually grocery stores, supermarkets, and bakeries can accept coupons as payment for food. Some places display a sign that says they will accept coupons.
- Food stamps are used to buy food only. You cannot buy alcohol, tobacco, soap, or household supplies with food stamps.
- Food stamps are not money. In a restaurant, you must pay with cash and not with food stamps.
- You may have to show identification or sign the coupons in front of the cashier to use them.
- Do not take coupons out of the book until you are ready to pay at the store.
- Keep the food stamp book in a safe place. If you lose this book, you cannot get it replaced.
- Your case will be reviewed after you have received food stamps for six months. Inform the welfare office if your financial status changes.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAMS

Children whose parents have a limited income may receive free or low-cost meals at school. These meals are usually lunches and sometimes include breakfast. Some child care centers, where very young children stay during the day, also have this program.

WOMEN, INFANTS AND CHILDREN (WIC)

Women who are pregnant or who have recently had a baby may be eligible for food supplements. Children up to the age of five are also eligible for supplementary foods.

- In some places you receive a check to purchase certain nutritional foods such as milk, eggs, cereal, fruit, juice, cheese. Other places provide food at a low cost or free.
- Health education is also part of the program. Mothers receive information about the family's nutritional needs.

ELDERLY PEOPLE

Some elderly people cannot prepare food for themselves. They can go to programs usually located in churches and community centers, for at least one meal each day. Some of these meals are free, but some programs may require a small payment or ask for a small donation. Another food program for the elderly is one that delivers meals to their homes. These programs have strict eligibility requirements and vary from place to place.

Each state's welfare program has its own eligibility requirements. Most places require that the welfare applicant also register with the state employment office. In some programs, the person who applies for welfare must agree to accept a public service job if one becomes available. Other programs allow people who are in certain job training programs to receive cash assistance.

If you qualify for cash assistance, you may receive a check about one month after applying. The check you receive could be enough to pay for rent, food, or clothing but is not meant to pay for everything you need.

TYPES OF ASSISTANCE

Types of assistance include General Assistance for eligible single people or childless couples, and Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). Two other types of assistance are:

Supplemental Security Income

This program gives cash assistance to people 65 years old and over, and to people who are handicapped, even if they live with their families. After applying, a person should receive a response regarding eligibility within 45 days.

Supplemental Income

This program provides a small amount of financial assistance to people with low-paying jobs who have large families and need more financial support.

THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT CASH ASSISTANCE

- Translators are not always available at the application site.
- The entire family usually is required to be at the interview.
- Give truthful information about your family during the interview. You will be penalized for not telling the truth.
- You should have as many of the following documents available as possible. They may be necessary in applying:
  - —I-94 (take the original, if you can)
  - —Rent bill or lease
  - —Social Security card
  - —Any pay stubs
  - —Bank account statement or savings passbook
  - —Utility bills
  - —Medical bills or proof of medical disability
  - —Employment registration card
- Take proper care of your welfare check. Sign it only in front of the cashier at the bank.

- Proper ID must be used when cashing a check. (A camp ID is not valid.) Inquire at welfare office or Department of Motor Vehicles for ID with photo and signature.
- Refugees receive the same amount as U.S. citizens. The amount you receive depends on where you live and how many are in your family.
- While waiting for cash assistance to become available, continue your search for work and study programs. Even if you find employment, you may still qualify for some financial support.
- You will have better chances for job improvement if you work and learn English at the same time. Studying English while using welfare will not give you important employment experience.
- After six months, the office will require an interview to review your case.

Learning English while working can better your chances for job improvement

At the employment office, you may be able to find out about additional employment services which help people who are temporarily out of work. Some of these programs are:

WIN: Work Incentive Program

This program makes it possible for people to obtain training or public service work while receiving a small amount of cash through welfare. Parents who qualify for this program can get day care services for their children.

Every state has different requirements, and this program may not always be available.

CETA: Comprehensive Employment and Training Act

This federally funded program provides people with a minimum wage while they are learning a skill; it offers many different types of training. Students 14 years old or over may work during their summer vacations from school.

Job Corps

This program provides residential vocational training for people from 16 to 21 years of age.

Many people need temporary assistance with housing and its expenses. In some areas there may not be enough housing, especially low-cost housing. Housing programs are available but vary from state to state.

Your area may have some of the following housing programs:

Rent Subsidy

If you qualify for this program, you pay a certain percentage of your rent while the remainder is paid through the housing assistance program.

Loan for building or buying a house

This may be available to you depending on your income and the size of your family.

Fuel assistance

If you qualify for this program, you pay a certain amount for fuel to heat your house while the fuel assistance program pays the remainder.

Legal advice is usually very expensive in the U.S. You can obtain free or low-cost legal advice for certain problems. These include consumer, housing, civil rights, family, employment, and cash assistance problems. In some areas, this legal service is called JUDICAID. (See Chapter Eight: Law in the United States.)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

You can make an appointment at your local social service office (or welfare office) to get specific information about programs available in your area. Usually applications for these programs are processed in this office.

For specific questions about these programs, you may also inquire at:

Program	Inquire at:
Medical assistance WIC	Local health clinic
Food assistance for school children	Public schools
Food assistance for the elderly	State agency on aging
ESL programs	Local community colleges or State superintendent for public schools
Employment programs	State employment office
Housing assistance	Local public housing authority or Regional Housing Urban Development office.

Other sources of information

—The voluntary agency or sponsor responsible for your resettlement.

—State Information and Referral Service. Every state has several offices to provide information about what government programs are available in the area. They can assist you by giving the name and telephone number of the agency providing the service, the office hours, and which documents may be needed.

PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS AND SERVICES

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Some of the services provided by private organizations include:

- Child care—a place for your children to stay safely while you work or attend training programs
- Immigration counseling—locating your relatives overseas; understanding your legal status in the U.S.
- English as a second language classes
- Home management—teaches basic skills about care for the apartment or house
- Skills recertification—assists people who have skills they wish to use here in the U.S. but do not have a certificate to prove ability

- Legal assistance
- Counseling—social adjustment, counseling for people have problems with the family, job, community
- Vocational training
- Translation services
- Drivers license information in native language

Instructor assisting trainee in

Instruction in the use of a bathtub is part of a home management course

who may

a machine shop

VOLUNTARY AGENCIES (VOLAGS)

The private group providing most of these services for you is your sponsor's agency. The U.S. government provides initial funding and a contract to 11 religious and other nonprofit organizations to provide services to refugees. Services include finding a sponsor for a refugee family and providing food, a place to live and clothing upon the refugees' arrival. Some voluntary agencies also provide employment and language training and other social services.

These organizations are comprised of individuals who are volunteers and professional social workers. The voluntary agencies report to their own national headquarters and to the American Council of Voluntary Agencies (ACVA). ACVA primarily serves as a liaison between the U.S. government and the voluntary agencies. It runs a refugee processing center to provide up-to-date information on the status of refugees' families in the camps.

MUTUAL ASSISTANCE ASSOCIATIONS (MAA'S)

Mutual assistance associations were created by ethnic leaders to help refugees feel more at home in their new community. Some organizations may provide some of those services listed above such as translations, counseling, or family reunification.

During ethnic holidays the local MAA in your area may provide facilities and schedule activities for celebrations. For more information, contact the local MAA in your area.

PUBLIC LIBRARY

For more information about your community, ask at your local public library. The library provides thousands of books on a wide range of subjects as well as periodicals, records, and sometimes films. Most libraries have a special section and activities for children.

To borrow books from the library, you must obtain a library card. The cardholder is responsible for all books, and the parents are especially responsible for children's books. If you return a book after the due date, you will be fined—usually 5¢ or 10¢ per book per day it's overdue.

Books may be borrowed from the library and taken home

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Your local police department is comprised of several divisions to serve you and your family. Uniformed officers patrol the community in cars and on foot to provide protection from crime. Other officers investigate serious crimes. School crossing guards supervise children crossing streets at busy intersections. This is one of the police department's community support services.

COURTS

Your district or county circuit court serves civil, traffic, and criminal cases, and payment of traffic fines. People can obtain a marriage license at the court building.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Your local fire department responds to fire and rescue calls in the city and outlying areas. When responding to these calls, a loud siren on the fire truck warns the cars and pedestrians to clear the way.

Fire truck

SOCIAL SERVICE ADVICE

SOCIAL SERVICE ADVICE

- Few programs have interpreter services. Call in advance to find out whether to bring an interpreter.
- Although programs may be available, they may also have long waiting lists of applicants.
- In some places it can take up to three months to process an application for assistance.
- Each state in the U.S. has different programs, which are usually administered on the local level. One community service is rarely the same as a similarly intended service in other communities.
- People who pay taxes know that their money pays for social services. This assistance is considered helpful only if a person really needs it. Some people do not think that everyone who receives assistance really needs it.
- People who are able to provide for their families may have started with social services or may need them if a crisis occurs. They try to become and to remain self-supporting again. This is because Americans value self-sufficiency and often look down upon those who depend on government aid.

CHECKLIST

Soon after you arrive in the United States you must:

☐ Apply for a social security card.

You may also have to:

☐ Apply for medicaid and/or public assistance.

VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS

The American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Service, Inc.
200 Park Ave., South
New York, NY 10003
(212) 777-8210

American Council for Nationalities Service (ACNS)
20 West 40th St.
New York NY 10018
(212) 398-9142

American Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees, Inc. (AFCR)
1790 Broadway—Room 513
New York NY 10019
(212) 265-1919

Buddhist Council for Refugee Rescue and Resettlement (BCRRR)
City of Ten Thousand Buddhas
Talmadge CA 95481
(707) 462-0930

Church World Service (CWS)
475 Riverside Drive, Room 666
New York NY 10027
(212) 870-2164
(in Los Angeles)
5250 Santa Monica Blvd.
Suite 311
Los Angeles CA 90029
(213) 666-2708

Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society Inc. (HIAS)
200 Park Ave., South
New York NY 10003
(212) 674-6800

International Rescue Committee (IRC)
386 Park Ave. South
New York, NY 10016
(212) 679-0010

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS)
360 Park Ave., South
New York NY 10010
(212) 532-6350
(800) 223-7656

National Council of YMCAs
291 Broadway
New York NY 10007
(212) 374-2284

Tolstoy Foundation, Inc.
250 West 57th St.
New York NY 10019
(212) 247-2922

United States Catholic Conference (USCC)
1312 Massachusetts Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 659-6625

World Relief Refugee Services (WRRS)
PO Box WRC
Nyack NY 10960
(914) 353-1444

In addition, two state agencies contract with the United States government to provide sponsorship for refugees.

Idaho State Voluntary Agency
Adult Learning Center
Boise State University
Boise ID 83725
(208) 385-3681

Iowa Refugee Service Center
150 Des Moines St.
Des Moines IA 50316
(515) 281-4334

Some of the programs that may be available in your area are:

- Pre-school education for children ages two through six. The child receives educational, dental, medical, nutritional, and recreational care. In some areas, this government-sponsored program is called Headstart.
- Primary education assistance for children in elementary school. They may receive free lunches or free transportation.

- Educational assistance may be available for students at the college level. One form is called a Basic Educational Opportunity Grant (BEOG).
- Adult education programs. You may be able to study math, English, and basic skills. These classes are often held at night, so they will not conflict with your work schedule.
- Vocational-education work study program. These enable you to study and work at the same time.

USEFUL NUMBERS IN YOUR AREA

USEFUL NUMBERS IN YOUR AREA

Local Mutual Assistance Association _____

Local Voluntary Agency Office _____

Sponsor _____

Social Service Office _____

School _____

Public Health Clinic _____

State Employment Office _____

Local Information and Referral _____

Public Library _____

Police _____

Fire Department _____

Orientation Resource Center 800-424-3701

Office of Refugee Resettlement 800-424-0212

MEDICAL CARE
IN THE UNITED STATES

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BACKGROUND NOTES

The American medical care system is different in almost every respect from the experience of most refugees. Procedures that Americans take for granted—series of blood tests, X-rays, making and keeping specific appointments, being examined by a doctor of the opposite sex, for example—are new and frightening to many refugees. In some areas, routine medical and dental care may be nonexistent. Conversely, some traditional health practices used by refugees in their own cultures may alarm Americans.

Some refugees come to America with high expectations of the medical system, so they may be angry or disappointed when not all of their ailments can be cured. For example, Americans recognize that little can be done for colds, viruses and other ordinary illnesses. The refugee may be surprised that the Western medical system can't cure these problems.

Because of the differences, it is important for the sponsor to work closely with the refugee to make sure that early experiences with the medical system are not so frightening that they prevent the refugee from seeking needed treatment later on.

What to Do if You Don't Feel Good. While the handbook discusses clinics and doctors in general, it will help if you can show the refugees the facilities they are likely to use. (p. 149)

Physical Examinations. This can be a confusing, frightening experience for the refugee. It is extremely helpful if you can arrange to bring an interpreter along to explain the process and reassure the refugee. You cannot assume that the doctor or clinic will have an interpreter available, so check in advance. (p. 150)

Drugs and Medication. Many refugees are unfamiliar with prescription medication, so it may be necessary for you to be sure they take medication exactly as prescribed. (pp. 152-153)

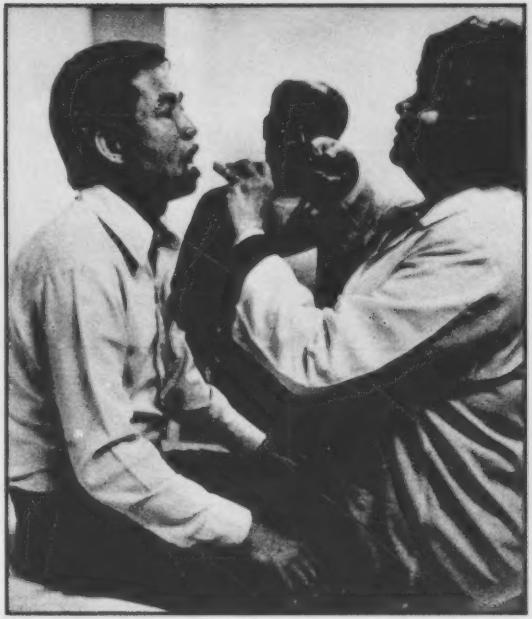
Hospitals. Show the refugee the local hospital and location of the emergency room. The handbook emphasizes the need to use emergency services only in case of serious accident or illness. (pp. 154-155)

Vaccination. Help the refugees keep immunization records for their children, because these will be needed for school enrollment. (p. 156)

Dental. Dental care in many countries is very poor, so a high percentage of refugees arrive with serious problems. Help arrange an examination as soon as possible. Some clinics include a dental examination as part of the general physical check-up for refugees. (p. 157)

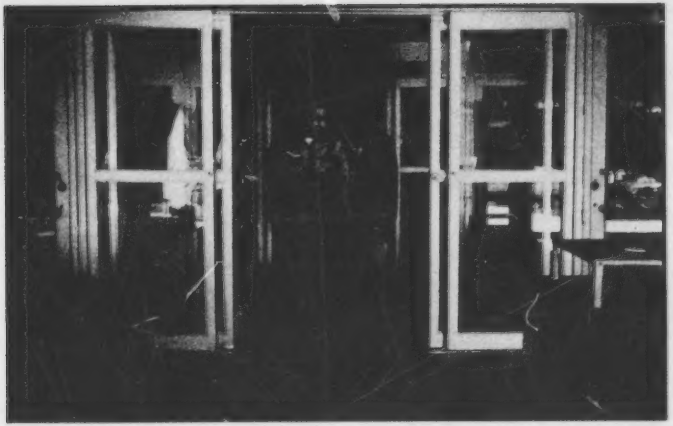
THE STORY OF MR. S

Mr. S. is not feeling well. He has headaches, a sore throat, and a high fever. His bilingual friend, Mr. C. made an appointment for him with his family doctor. The next day, he took his friend to Dr. Jones's office, making sure to arrive on time. After examining Mr. S., Dr. Jones diagnosed his ailment as an ear infection and prescribed antibiotics for ten days, plenty of liquids to drink, and lots of rest.



On their way home . . .

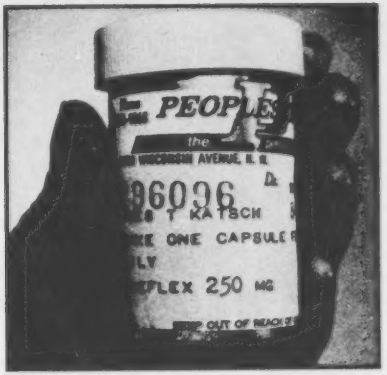
Mr. S: Dr. Jones is not a very good doctor.
Mr. C: Why do you say that?
Mr. S: He did not give me a shot. All he gave me are tablets.



Mr. C: Here in America, doctors do not give shots for every medical problem. The doctor examines the patient and prescribes the best medication. It is not always an injection. Remember, if the doctor told you to take the pills for a certain amount of time, take them, at the time of day and the amount the doctors says, no matter when you feel better. The instructions will be on the bottle of medicine.

Mr. S: What if I'm still sick after a few days?

Mr. C: If it gets worse or continues, you should call the doctor again.



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If you, your family, or friend has such a medical emergency, you should contact your sponsor or a bilingual friend to go with you to the hospital to explain the problem to the hospital staff. If you are unable to drive or take public transportation to the hospital, then you can call an AMBULANCE to take you to the hospital. In many places if you call the police or fire department, they will be able to send an ambulance to you. ASK YOUR SPONSOR OR A FRIEND FOR THE NUMBER OF THE CLOSEST AMBULANCE SERVICE AND KEEP THAT NUMBER NEAR THE TELEPHONE.

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AT THE EMERGENCY ROOM

When you go to the emergency room, you must check in at a desk or counter, explain your problem, and fill out some forms giving your name, address, place of employment, medical card and the like. A parent or guardian must sign these forms for a child's treatment. If the child's life is in danger, and surgery or a blood transfusion is essential, the parent is required by law to give consent for the medical procedure, even if it is against his or her wish. Your sponsor or a bilingual friend can help you do this. Then you will be treated and either released or required to stay in the hospital, depending on the severity of your problem.

NOTE: In some hospital emergency rooms, you may be required to prove that you will be able to pay for the services given to you. In most places, PUBLIC HOSPITALS — those receiving government aid — are required to give you emergency treatment in any case. IF YOU HAVE ANY PROBLEMS GETTING EMERGENCY TREATMENT, CONTACT YOUR SPONSOR OR VOLAG IMMEDIATELY.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU DON'T FEEL GOOD

When Americans have a medical problem that they don't understand, they call their doctor promptly. A doctor may be found in a private office or a clinic.

If you go to a private doctor, you will have to make an appointment in advance. If your problem does not sound too severe to the doctor, he/she may ask to see you in a few days, when there is an opening in his/her schedule. IF AN APPOINTMENT IS MADE, ALWAYS BE THERE ON TIME. IF YOU CANNOT, CALL THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE AS SOON AS YOU KNOW. OTHERWISE, YOU WILL BE CHARGED FOR THE VISIT, WHETHER YOU RECEIVE TREATMENT OR NOT. There may be "follow-up" appointments made — for additional tests, for example. These appointments must also be kept.

If you go to a clinic, you may or may not have to make an appointment. If you can't keep an appointment, LET THE CLINIC KNOW IN ADVANCE. Clinics are sometimes attached to large universities that have medical colleges, or they may be funded by the local government. Generally, public health clinics are less expensive than private doctors. Very often, the amount charged is in proportion to your salary.

ASK YOUR SPONSOR OR A FRIEND WHERE YOU CAN FIND THE BEST AND LEAST EXPENSIVE MEDICAL TREATMENT IN YOUR AREA.

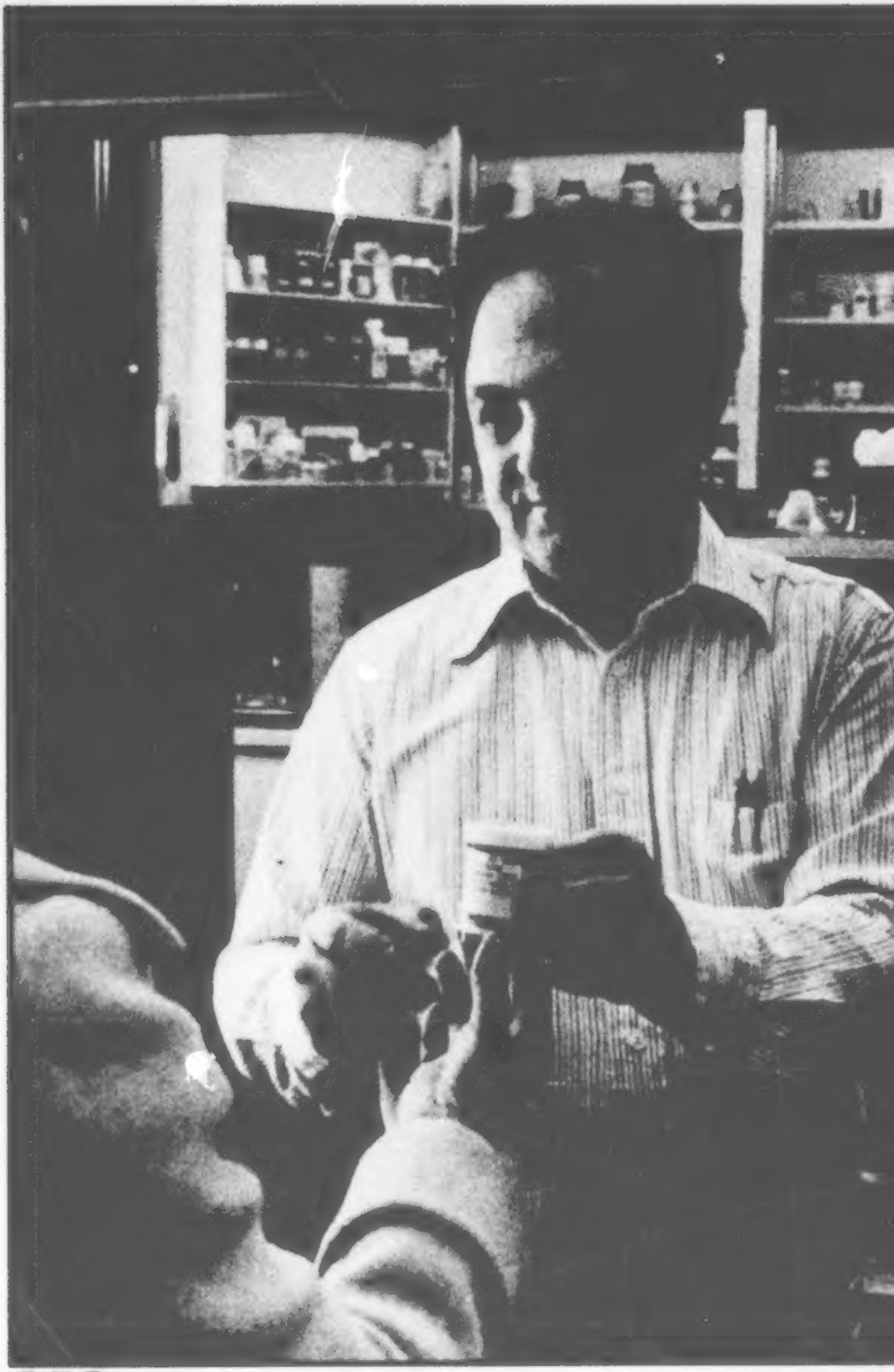
PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS

So that the doctor can diagnose your problem, you may have to submit to a physical examination. Certain parts of the exam may seem unfamiliar, such as:

- **blood pressure:** using a pump on the arm to determine heartbeat
- **blood test:** extracting blood to test for any problems (the blood loss is replaced quickly by the body)
- **pelvic exam:** women are checked for possible problems that can affect pregnancy and birth
- **temperature:** a thermometer is inserted in the mouth to check that body temperature is normal
- **throat examination:** using a tongue depressor (shaped like a flat stick) to check conditions in the mouth and throat.

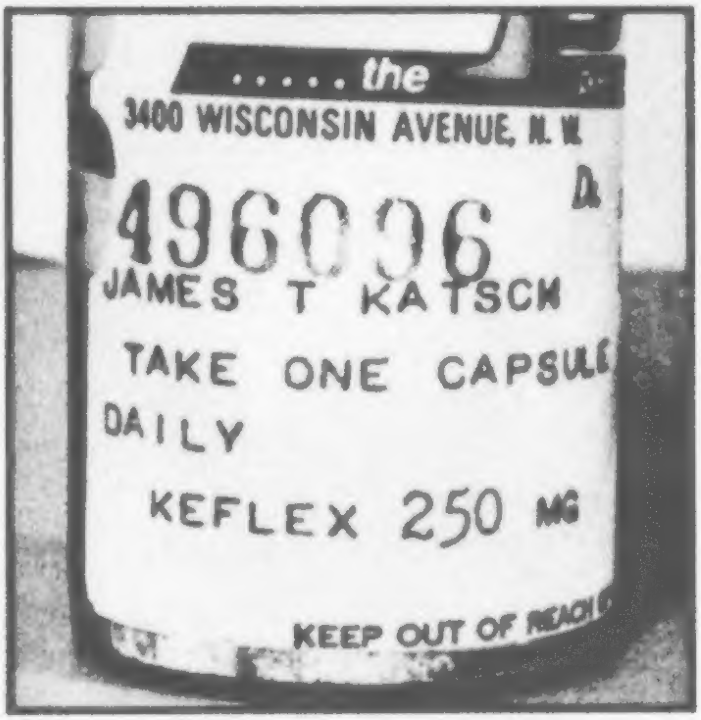
QUESTIONS AND FORMS

When you go to the clinic or to the doctor for the first time, you will be required to answer questions and fill out forms. Some of the information may seem personal to you, but your treatment can be more effective if you answer as truthfully and completely as possible. If the forms seem confusing to you, ask a friend or your sponsor for some help. Do not sign the forms until you are sure you understand them.



DRUGS AND MEDICINES

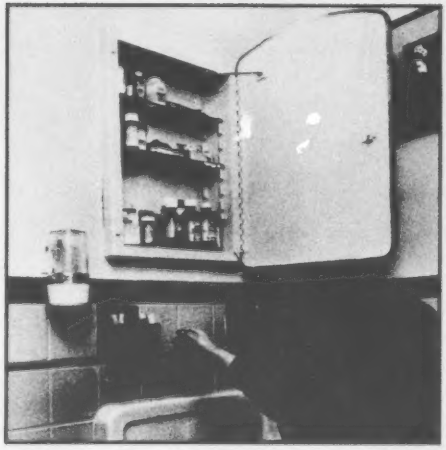
After seeing you, the physician may prescribe special medication for you to take. This will be written on a prescription. Take this to a drugstore or pharmacy, where the pharmacist can give you the medication the doctor ordered. BE SURE TO FOLLOW THE DOCTOR'S DIRECTIONS FOR TAKING THE MEDICATION. FOR EXAMPLE, IF THE DOCTOR TELLS YOU TO TAKE PILLS FOR TEN DAYS AND AFTER FIVE DAYS YOU BEGIN TO FEEL BETTER, YOU SHOULD STILL TAKE THE PILLS FOR TEN DAYS.



Many people will go to the pharmacy or drugstore when they are sick and obtain nonprescription medication. If the medicine they choose doesn't cure their illness, they will often try others hoping for an inexpensive cure. If you are sick, it is better to go to the doctor or a clinic and get your problem taken care of immediately. Many times this will be much less expensive than trying many medicines available in the drugstore.

Overuse of any medication can be dangerous to your health. If you are seeing a doctor for a particular medical problem, be sure that he knows about the other medications you are taking. If medicines are prescribed for you by the doctor, NEVER TAKE ANY OTHERS WITHOUT HIS PERMISSION. If you are taking herbal medicines, do not mix them with American medicines without asking your doctor first.

REMEMBER, FOR SAFETY, KEEP ALL MEDICATION OUT OF THE REACH OF CHILDREN.



HOSPITALS

If the doctor thinks you are very sick or require further detailed examination, he may require you to go to the hospital for a set period of time. Americans expect the hospital to have a great deal of modern equipment that they don't understand. The doctors and medical staff expect patients to ask questions when there is something that they don't understand. Americans believe in informed consent, which is the right to know what is going to happen and the right to accept or refuse treatment.

Hospital Rules and Regulations

There are a number of rules and regulations you are expected to know about when you are in the hospital.

- In most hospitals, there are designated smoking areas. SMOKING IS NOT PERMITTED IN PATIENTS' ROOMS.
- In most hospitals, there are regular VISITING HOURS when you can visit the patient. If, however, the patient is in INTENSIVE CARE, then only certain close relatives may be allowed to visit, for only a few minutes at a time.

- Quiet is very important in hospitals. Patients or visitors should never play music loudly, turn the television volume high, or shout or joke around in a loud, disturbing manner. Peace and quiet are believed essential to a quick recovery.
- Your doctor may require a specific diet for you when you are in the hospital. You should follow the advice of the doctor, but if some of the food served to you is too unusual or offensive, ask if another food can be substituted. FOOD SHOULD NOT BE BROUGHT IN FROM THE OUTSIDE WITHOUT THE DOCTOR'S PERMISSION.
- Burning incense, lighting candles, or doing other such religious acts may not be permitted in patients' room. ASK PERMISSION FIRST.
- Phone calls can often be made in your hospital room. Long distance calls can be put on your hospital bill or you can charge them to your home telephone bill. Pay telephones are usually available in wards that do not have private phones.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE HOSPITAL

If you are in the hospital, remember that many people — doctors, nurses, medical technicians, dietitians — will ask you many questions. These can be about health history or that of your family, allergies, type of drugs that you currently use or have used in the past, and so forth. If you are a patient, you should be as cooperative as possible and try your best to answer the questions asked. In many cases, your cooperation will help for a speedy recovery and a quick release from the hospital.

REMEMBER, IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT MEDICAL PROCEDURES, EQUIPMENT, MEDICATION, OR TREATMENTS — ASK.

VACCINATIONS

For children, immunizations or vaccinations to prevent certain diseases are required by law in the U.S. Babies are routinely vaccinated for diptheria, whooping cough, and tetanus (DPT). Children are often immunized against mumps, measles, and polio. After vaccination, you will be given an IMMUNIZATION RECORD, which may be necessary for children to show when they first enter a school system. Certain vaccinations are given in the schools at little or no cost to the student or his family. At school, children may also receive vision and hearing tests, and similar medical treatment.

DENTAL CARE

Dental care is very important for Americans. Clean teeth a pleasing smile are considered marks of beauty in the U.S Americans take care of their teeth by brushing at least twice with a toothbrush and toothpaste or toothpowder.

When Americans have medical problems with their teeth, or gums, they go to the dentist or to a dental clinic. Dental ca be costly in the U.S. but proper care of teeth is essential for y all-around health. Many schools have programs for students fluoride treatment programs. These treatments — in which a substance called fluoride is put into the mouth of the student few minutes — may prevent the need for expensive dental ca later years. Generally, the longer you wait to see the dentist, more expensive treatment is likely to be. It is much easier to small dental problem than one that has become large.

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PAYMENT FOR MEDICAL AND DENTAL SERVICES

For most Americans, health care and medical care are not free. Each time a person visits the doctor or dentist, he/she must pay for the doctor's or dentist's services. Medical and dental care are expensive. Many Americans have medical insurance to help cover the high cost. However, insurance does not usually cover all medical costs. It is necessary to pay for those costs not covered by insurance. Some people do not earn enough money to pay for their medical and dental bills.

To help people, the government has various assistance programs determined by the amount that the patient is able to pay. Americans believe that medical and dental care are important and that everyone should be able to receive such care.

IF YOU HAVE PROBLEMS WITH MEDICAL OR DENTAL BILLS, ASK YOUR SPONSOR OR VOLAG FOR ADVICE.

PREVENTING ILLNESS

It is very important to dress appropriately for American climates. In colder areas you must wear shoes, socks, and appropriate outerwear. Otherwise, you may become ill.

Also to maintain good health, it is important to live in a clean environment. Especially, kitchens and bathrooms should be kept clean and free from stale food and garbage. Toilets should be kept clean, and water should not be left in the sink or tub after use.

Health-Related Customs in the U.S.

In the U.S. there are a number of practices which are considered impolite and unhealthy. You should know about these.

- Always use a handkerchief or a kleenex to blow your nose in public places or inside a public building.
- Never urinate in the street. This creates a smell that is offensive to Americans. They also believe that it causes disease. Always use a public restroom or your bathroom inside your home.
- Spitting in public is considered impolite and unhealthy. Use a kleenex or handkerchief.
- Picking your nose or your ears in public is frowned upon in the United States. If you must do these things, do so in private.
- Americans believe that children, no matter what age, should have their bottoms clothed when out in public — regardless of the temperature. Also, children should be shown how to use public restrooms. Diapers should be used while in public with younger children. If paper diapers are used, they should be thrown out (not flushed down the toilet) when soiled. Cloth diapers are washed and dried after being soiled.
- Americans feel that it is very healthy for mothers to breastfeed their babies. This is done in private, however.

CHECKLIST

- ☐ As soon as you arrive, arrange a physical examination, eye examination and dental checkup for yourself and your family.
- ☐ Arrange to receive necessary immunizations and keep a record of them.
- ☐ Make sure you understand the need to have blood drawn for tests
- ☐ Learn how to arrange routine medical care and the need to keep appointments.
- ☐ Know whom to contact for any necessary emergency treatment.
- ☐ Learn basic principles of hygiene.
- ☐ Learn basic principles of nutrition.
- ☐ Make sure you know when and how to use your medication.
- ☐ If you want, ask where to receive family planning information and services.
- ☐ Find out how you can obtain health insurance or medicaid.

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BACKGROUND NOTES

You may have heard that many countries don't use money the same way we do in day-to-day life. Perhaps people trade one type of goods for another, or a buyer and seller may negotiate a price for goods. In a sense, however, the American financial system does not routinely use money either. We receive paychecks, use credit cards, buy with charge accounts and pay bills with checks. This may be a complex, confusing system to the refugee who may not even be accustomed to using any form of currency. You know how confusing matters such as taxes, credit and interest are to many Americans, so imagine how much more confused the refugee will be.

Shopping practices may also be very different. Many refugees are accustomed to marketplaces in which small, specialized stores offer needed goods. While America certainly has specialized shops, we are also accustomed to huge supermarkets in which one can buy food, clothes, medication, hardware, cameras and transmission fluid, all in the same store.

Food shopping is a particular area of difference. Prepackaged, convenience, and frozen foods are all new to the refugee who is probably more used to buying fresh meat from the person who slaughtered the animal.

Because most refugees are on a tight budget, they will need help to learn how to shop wisely in this country.

Money. The handbook describes the American monetary system. Show the refugee different coins and currency while referring to the handbook's explanation. (pp. 165-167)

Banks. Most refugees have never used a bank before, so they will need help to cash checks and start savings and checking accounts. (pp. 168-172)

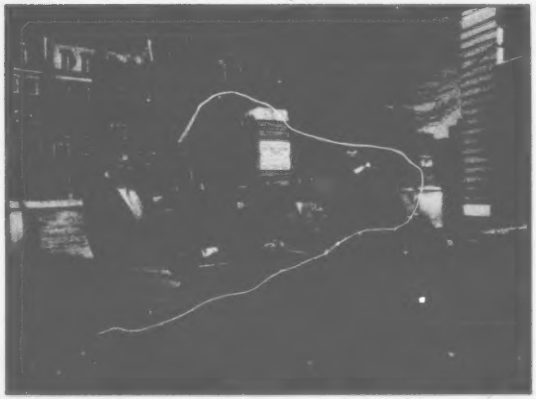
Taxes. Refugees may need to be reminded that the government expects them to file an income tax form every year. (pp. 173-176)

Insurance. Generally an entirely new concept to refugees, they may not recognize the need for various types of insurance. If necessary, it may be helpful to introduce them to a good insurance salesman. (pp. 177-180)

Shopping. While the handbook describes the various kinds of stores in the United States, the refugees will still need an "in-person" demonstration of the stores in your community and how to use them. (pp. 186-195)

THE STORY OF MR. K

Mr. S and Mr. K are working the day shift in the restaurant from 7 o'clock in the morning to 3 o'clock in the afternoon. Mr. S has been working there for some time, but Mr. K is a new employee. Friday is his first pay day. After work, Mr. K expects a ride home with Mr. S as usual, but Mr. S tells him that he has to stop at the bank first.



Mr. S: On pay days, I deposit some of the money in my bank account and take only a small amount of cash home.

Mr. K: Does that mean you have to keep coming back to the bank everytime you need money to pay bills or buy things?

Mr. S: No. I can write checks to pay bills and to buy things at most stores. I only have to go to the bank when I need cash. Don't you have an account?

Mr. K: I like to keep my money with me; I feel more comfortab
that way.

Mr. S: That's risky. What if you lost it or were robbed? When
you put money in the bank, it's protected against all
kinds of loss.

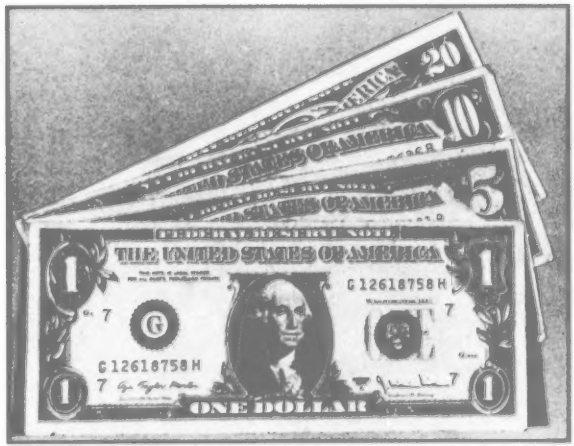
Mr. K: Would they let me have an account? You know, I just
came here recently.

Mr. S: Sure! Anybody can apply. All you have to have is a pro
identification with a photo. Come in with me and see
what kind of account is best for you.

Mr. S and Mr. K go into the bank together. After talking with a bank officer, Mr. K decides to get a checking account, since it will be much easier for him to pay his bills by check.

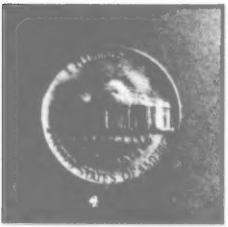
THE MONEY SYSTEM IN THE UNITED STATES

American money can be either paper (bills) or metal (coins). Bills come in amounts of one, two, five, 10, 20, 50, and 100 dollars. Larger bills exist but are rarely used, since Americans do not usually carry large amounts of cash with them. All bills are the same size and color regardless of their value. You must look carefully at the number written on the bill to see how much it is worth. Since new bills frequently stick together, always check to be sure that you have the correct number.



There are 100 cents in one dollar; coins represen
amounts of one dollar or less. They are silver in co
for the one-cent piece, which is copper-colored. Coi
confusing because their size does not indicate their

The one-cent piece is called a



The five-cent piece is called a

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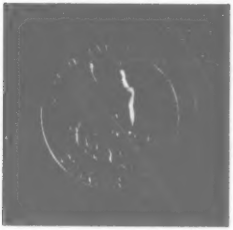
penny.

nickel.

A dime, while smaller than a nickel and a penny, is worth ten cents.



The most widely used coin is the quarter, worth twenty-five cents.

The half-dollar is also known as a fifty-cent piece.

The symbol ¢ means "cent." It only appears to denote amounts of less than one dollar: for example, 50¢. The symbol $ means "dollar." Dollar amounts are always placed to the left of a decimal point, while cent amounts are placed to the right. For example, 50¢ can also be written $.50. Two dollars and forty-three cents is written $2.43. A comma is used to represent "thousand": $1,243.43.

OTHER WAYS TO PA

Many Americans u other means tha cash to pay for goods a services. Common mean of payment include the check and the credit ca These are safer than ca because they can usual be replaced if lost or stolen. Two other usefu methods of payment ar the traveler's check and money order. They are used just like cash but can be easily replaced if stolen. You can buy them from bank. Money orders can also be purchased at the post office. If you need to send money by mail, to pay for su things as utilities, use a money order or check. Never s cash by mail.

BANKS

Most banks are open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday. Some banks are also open Friday evening and Saturday morning. It is advisable to put your money in the bank rather than keep it in your home. The government guarantees that you will not lose your money if something happens to the bank, such as fire or theft.

Not all banks are the same. You should choose a bank that has a convenient location and hours and that offers the services you need.

When you deal with a bank you make an agreement regarding the use of your money. You instruct the bank to cash checks for you and to give you your money back whenever you want it. In return, the bank can invest or use your money any way it wishes as long as it honors your instructions.

If someone writes a check to you, you may cash it by signing your name on the back of the check. Write your name just as it appears on the front. This is called endorsing. Always endorse your check just before you cash it or deposit it. Never endorse your check ahead of time. If it were lost, someone else could use it.

OPENING A BANK ACCOUNT

Opening a bank account is so simple that it takes only a few minutes. When you go to the bank, take some sort of identification (a passport, for example) and your first deposit. This deposit can be in the form of cash, a check, or a money order.

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CHECKING ACCOUNT

You will need to fill out a personal information form. You will also fill out a card that registers the signatures of the people authorized to use the account. Sign your name on this card exactly as you will be signing your name on the checks.

You may choose either a single or joint account. With a single account, only the person who owns the account can sign the check. This is probably the kind of account you will choose if you are a single person living alone or if you do not want your spouse to be able to sign checks. If the owner of a single account dies, the money in his account goes to the person named in his or her will. You will probably choose a joint account if you are married and both you and your spouse need to sign checks. Sometimes it is wise to have a joint account with some other member of your family if you want someone to be able to get your money if there's an accident. Checks drawn on a joint account may be signed by either owner as long as both their signatures are registered on the bank's official signature card.

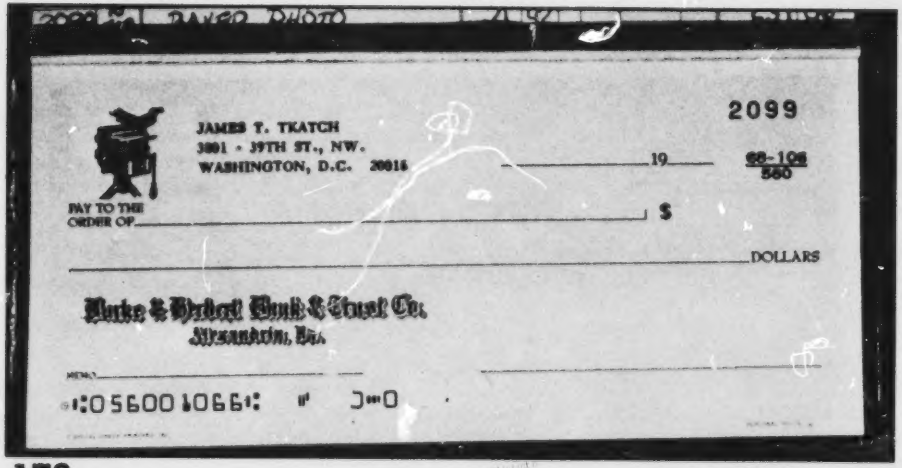
After you fill out the forms and make your deposit, you will be shown check designs to choose from. Remember that the bank may charge you extra for fancy checks. If you choose a plain paper style, your checks may be less expensive. Also, your checks will be specially printed with your name, address, and identification number. This information printed on your check is important; the color and style are not.

It usually takes a few weeks for your checks to be printed. They will be sent to your home address. The printing charges will be deducted from your account. (Remember that when you are doing your own records.) In the meantime, the bank will give you some "temporary" checks to use so that you can conduct business.

With your checks you will find deposit slips. These papers, like your checks, have your name and identification number on them. You use them when you are putting money into your account. The checks are for drawing money out of the account.

Most Americans use checks to pay their regular bills. While checks are safe, not all places of business will accept them. You will need identification such as a driver's license when you cash a check.
You may write checks up to the amount of money deposited in the checking account. Sometimes you will have to pay a service charge for the processing of the checks. It may be about 10¢ per check. There also may be a monthly charge. Some banks do not have this charge, or it may depend on the balance in your account.

Always write your checks with pen, not pencil



Writing Checks

When you write a check you must include the following:

- the date
- the person or company you wish to pay
- the amount of money in numbers
- the amount of money in written form
- your signature

The space called "memo" or "for" allows you to make a note of what you paid for.

Never write a check for more than the amount that you have in your checking account. For each "bad check" that you write, your bank will usually charge you at least five dollars. The bank will notify you that your account has "insufficient funds" and is overdrawn. To avoid problems, keep a record of each check that you write. Be aware of how much money you have deposited and withdrawn and subtract the service charges from the balance. The bank will send you a monthly statement along with your cancelled checks. (These are checks that you have written and the bank has cashed.) Check this to be sure your balance agrees with the bank's balance.

If you ever lose your checkbook or a check that you have signed, notify the bank immediately to stop payment on it. This will prevent the finder from taking money out of your account. You may have to pay a fee for this service.

There are other types of checks that can be used in different situations, for example, cashier's checks and certified checks. Ask the bank about these services.

Keep a record of the checks you write

PLEASE BE SURE TO DEDUCT CHARGES THAT AFFECT YOUR ACCOUNT									BALANCE FORWARD	
NO.	DATE	ISSUED TO OR DESCRIPTION OF DEPOSIT	AMOUNT OF PAYMENT		✓	OTHER DEBIT	AMOUNT OF DEPOSIT		396	31
16	2/6/81	TO GRAND UNION	15	95	✓		800	00	380	86
		FOR FOOD							1180	86
17	2/7/81	TO EXXON	152	34	✓					
		FOR GAS							1028	52
18	2/8/81	TO FORD MOTOR CREDIT	100	00	✓					
		FOR CAR FINANCING							928	52
	2/10/81	TO					10	00		
		FOR							938	52
19	2/11/81	TO A & P	15	60						
		FOR FOOD							922	92
20	2/12/81	TO SEARS	50	12						
		FOR CLOTH							872	80

SAFE DEPOSIT BOX

If you have jewelry or valuable documents like passports and insurance papers, do not keep them in your home. Go to a bank and rent a safe deposit box. The rent for these is usually very low—about $10 to $20 per year. Your possessions will be protected in the bank's vault, but you can get them any time the bank is open.

LOANS

Many large purchases—such as a car or house—are financed or paid for by a loan. If you have a good job, you may be able to borrow money from your bank, then pay part of the money back to the bank every month for a period of years. Interest is added to the amount you must pay. For example, if you borrow $3,000 to buy a car, you might have to pay $150 a month for 24 months. In two years you have paid $3600, and the extra $600 is the interest charge. The amount of interest depends in part on the bank you borrow from. Faithful payment of the loan will help you establish a good credit rating.

Taxes help pay for road maintenance

KINDS OF TAXES

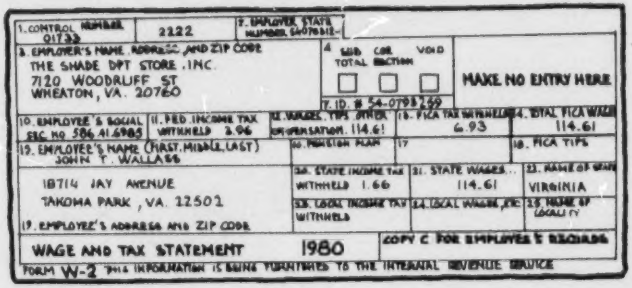
The amount of money you pay in taxes depends on how much money you earn and the property you own. Usually the more a person earns, the more taxes a person pays; the less a person earns, the less taxes a person pays. There are different kinds of taxes.

FEDERAL INCOME TAX

The federal income tax must be paid by everyone who lives in the United States, even noncitizens. Most employers automatically deduct federal income tax payments from each paycheck. This is called "withholding taxes."

At your place of employment you will fill out a withholding form. This determines how much tax will be regularly taken out of your pay.

Every year around January 31, each of your employers will send out a W-2 statement. This form shows the amount of money you earned during the calendar year and the amount deducted for taxes. The W-2 form also indicates the withholding taxes for state and local governments and social security taxes (FICA). It is very important to keep the W-2 statement in a safe place. You will need it to complete your income tax return.



1. CONTROL NUMBER 01733 — 2222 — 2. EMPLOYER'S STATE NUMBER (OPTIONAL)

3. EMPLOYER'S NAME, ADDRESS, AND ZIP CODE
THE SHADE DPT STORE, INC.
7120 WOODRUFF ST
WHEATON, VA. 20760

4. STAT. EMP. / RET. PLAN / THIRD PARTY SICK PAY / LEGAL REPRES. / DEFERRED COMP. / VOID

MAKE NO ENTRY HERE

7. I.D. # 54-0793169

10. EMPLOYEE'S SOCIAL SEC. NO. 586 41 6985
11. FED. INCOME TAX WITHHELD 2.96
12. WAGES, TIPS, OTHER COMPENSATION 114.61
13. FICA TAX WITHHELD 6.93
14. TOTAL FICA WAGES 114.61

15. EMPLOYEE'S NAME (FIRST, MIDDLE, LAST)
JOHN T. WALLACE
16. PENSION PLAN
17
18. FICA TIPS

18714 JAY AVENUE
TAKOMA PARK, VA. 12501
19. EMPLOYEE'S ADDRESS AND ZIP CODE

19A. STATE INCOME TAX WITHHELD 1.66
19B. LOCAL INCOME TAX WITHHELD
20. STATE WAGES 114.61
21. LOCAL WAGES, ETC.
22. NAME OF STATE VIRGINIA
23. NAME OF LOCALITY

WAGE AND TAX STATEMENT 1980

COPY C FOR EMPLOYEE'S RECORDS

FORM W-2 THIS INFORMATION IS BEING FURNISHED TO THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE

Every year you must complete a form to send to the government. This shows how much money you earned and how much tax was paid through deductions. This form is called an INCOME TAX RETURN. It must be completed and sent in by April 15 each year. It shows your earnings and taxes for the previous calendar year. The form is sent to the INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE (IRS) which is the government office that handles federal income taxes. The Internal Revenue Service has many local offices. If you need help completing your form or have questions about taxes, go to the local IRS office.

SOCIAL SECURITY TAX (FICA)

Social Security tax is usually deducted from a person's paycheck in the same way as federal income tax. The amount collected goes into a special fund. It will provide you with retirement benefits when you are old enough to retire or disability benefits if you are injured and can no longer work.

STATE INCOME TAX

State income tax is paid to the state government. Most employees deduct state income tax from a person's paycheck. The state tax is similar to the

federal income tax, but the amount a person must pay is usually not as high. For those states that have a state income tax, you must complete a form and send it to the state government once a year.

PROPERTY TAX

Property tax may be charged on a house, land, or personal possessions such as a car or jewelry worth over a certain amount. These taxes are usually charged by the state or local government.

It is important to keep records of all earning and expenses; they will be needed when you fill out your tax returns.

MERCHANDISE TAXES

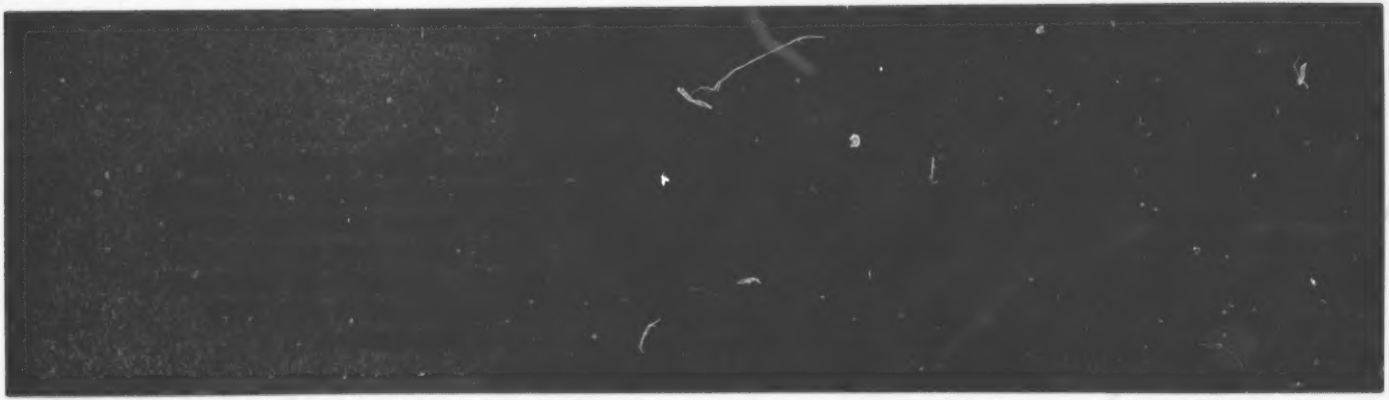
There are many other taxes charged by the federal and state governments on goods you may buy or import from abroad.

CUSTOMS TAX is charged by the federal government on merchandise that is imported. The amount depends on the value of the goods.

SALES TAX is charged by the federal and state governments on some kinds of products that you buy in the United States. The price marked on an item in a store usually does not include the sales tax, so you must be aware that the tax will be added to the cost. The amount of the tax will vary from state to state.

TAX SERVICES

The American tax system is complicated. Because of this, most government tax offices offer free help and advice to individuals with questions or problems. There are also some toll-free telephone numbers which people can call for answers to their tax questions. These are listed in the telephone directory for your area. Do not confuse the public tax offices with private companies that charge for their help on taxes. Ask a friend or your sponsor to help you find someone to assist you with your taxes.



People buy insurance to protect themselves and their property

WHAT IS INSURANCE?

When you buy insurance, you pay a certain amount of money to an insurance company; in return, the insurance company guarantees to pay you a previously agreed upon amount of money if one of these unfortunate events occurs. You can usually arrange to make payments either once a month, once every three months or twice a year. If you buy an insurance policy and later find that you no longer need it, you may cancel the policy at any time and get a refund for any advance payments you have already made.

TYPES OF INSURANCE

There are many kinds of insurance. PROPERTY INSURANCE helps pay for possessions that are lost because of fire, theft or other accidents. LIFE INSURANCE provides financial security for the members of a family if the wage-earner for the family dies. This money can also be used to replace lost income, pay for funeral expenses or cover other expenses a family may have. The most common types of insurance that are important for newly-arrived refugees are HEALTH INSURANCE and AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE.

HEALTH INSURANCE

Health insurance can cover the costs of staying in the hospital, as well as some of the treatment you receive while you are in the hospital. Some health insurance policies cover regular medical expenses, such as doctors' fees and medical tests.

Health insurance is often paid for in part by your employer and may cover members of your family as well as yourself. When this is done, the employer pays for part of the costs of insurance, and the rest is deducted from your paycheck.

In addition to health insurance, some employers offer disability insurance if you are sick or injured and cannot work. Some employers also offer workmen's compensation insurance, in case you are injured while at your job. You may want to ask your employer if these kinds of insurance are available where you work.

If an employer provides insurance, the policy will be terminated if you leave your job, unless you contact the insurance company and agree to make the payments yourself.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Automobile Insurance should be purchased when you buy a car. In some states it is against the law to drive a car that is uninsured. If you are in a car accident and do not have insurance, you would have to pay for all of the damages yourself, which could cost thousands of dollars, if it were a serious accident. If you could not pay, you would lose your driver's license and the right to drive. Automobile insurance also pays for hospital and doctor bills for people who are injured in a car accident. There are many different parts of an automobile insurance policy, each with a separate cost attached to it, which pay for damages to your car, to another person's car, or for damages if someone is injured or killed in a car accident.

BUYING INSURANCE

If you need to buy insurance, ask your sponsor or a friend for help. Buying insurance can be complicated, even for Americans, so you should plan to spend some time finding out about the different kinds that are available.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Another kind of insurance that may be important to you is UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE, which provides you with money if you lose your job. This insurance is run by the state government, and most employers pay taxes to the state to cover the cost of the program. The rules determining if you are able to get unemployment insurance are different in each state. In most cases you must have worked at your last job for a specified amount of time before you can qualify to receive unemployment insurance. The amount you receive will depend on how long you worked and the salary you earned. If you qualify, the payments you receive will also be for a specified amount of time; they will not continue indefinitely. If you lose your job, you should go immediately to the nearest unemployment office in your state. They will tell you if you qualify for unemployment insurance and will help you find a new job.

CHECKLIST

- ☐ The value of different coins and currency.
- ☐ Obtain an ID card for identification in cashing checks.
- ☐ Different taxes that you will have to pay.
- ☐ Banks and the different kinds of bank accounts available.
- ☐ Credit and its uses and abuses.

THE STORY OF MR. C

Mr. C, his wife, child and brother recently came to the United States. Mr. C's first job was at a gas station.

One day after he had gotten paid, Mr. C wanted to buy some new clothes for himself and his family. He went to a small clothing store nearby, not knowing what the clothing sizes meant, what the prices were, or whether they were reasonable. He selected clothes that he liked and hoped would fit his family.

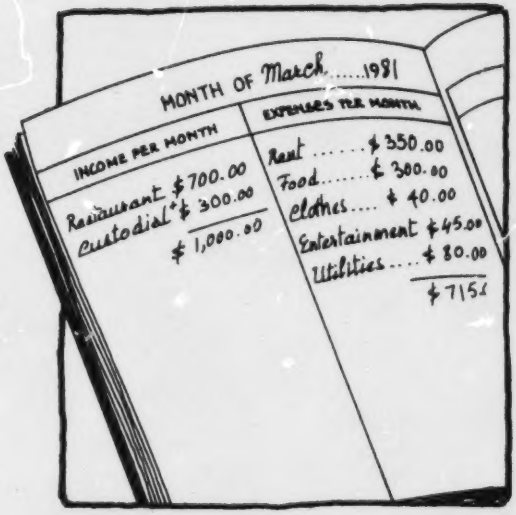
He came home with a big package full of new clothes, and eagerly asked his wife to try hers on. The clothes were beautiful, but none of them fit. His wife was disappointed and began to worry about wasting money, so she went to see her neighbor, Mrs. Z, who had been here for two years and had been helping them since they arrived. She asked Mrs. Z if there was anything she could do.

Mrs. Z suggested that if Mrs. C still had the receipt the store had given her husband for the clothes, they could exchange the clothing or ask for a refund at the store. Mrs. C looked everywhere for the receipt. It was still in the bag the store had wrapped the clothes in. Luckily, she found the bag in the trash can. The next day Mrs. Z accompanied Mr. and Mrs. C to the store and they exchanged the clothes for smaller sizes. They tried the clothes on in the store's dressing room to make sure they would fit.

After they left the store, Mrs. Z told them that the clothes they had bought at the small store were much more expensive than those at large discount stores. The next Saturday, Mrs. Z took them to a shopping center in which they could shop for shoes, clothes and many other things. The shoe store was having a sale, so Mr. and Mrs. C each bought two pairs. In one big clothing store, Mr. C compared the prices of the same clothes that he had bought the past week and found they were a great deal cheaper there.

BUDGETING

A budget is a plan to spend your money wisely. Add up your income and then determine your expenses. Your income should be more than your expenses. A budget tells you how much you must spend on essential items and how much you can afford to spend on non-essential items. Extra money can be saved and used for future large purchases, like buying new furniture, or for emergencies.



PREPARING FOR SHOPPING

Before you do your shopping, decide which store will give you the best values. If you can, visit various stores and compare prices for similar items. The following suggestions may help you:

- Lists. Write down the items you need to buy. At the store you should try to buy only what's on your list. This avoids overspending and saves time.
- Coupons. You can find these in the newspaper or in magazines. They look like small cards with the picture of the products and the amount of money you will save if you buy the product. For example, a coupon may save you 20¢ on a jar of coffee. Don't buy a product you don't need just because you have a "money saving" coupon for it. Coupons also have expiration dates on them and you can't use the coupons after these dates.

- Sales. During a sale, the regular price of merchandise is lowered. By watching for sales and comparing prices, you can save a significant amount of money on things you need.
- Other. You can ask sponsors, friends, and neighbors where to shop. Remember that most stores in the U.S. have fixed prices. This means the store has given an item one price, which cannot be changed. Never try to bargain for anything in a store unless you are sure that bargaining is acceptable.

PLACES TO SHOP

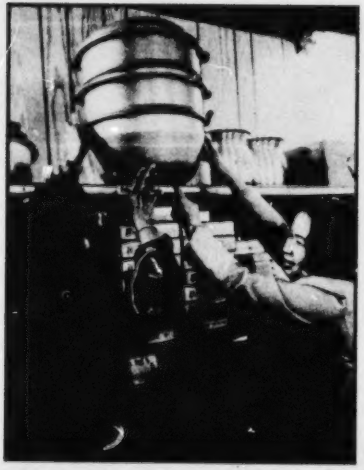
Most people in the U.S. do not shop every day. They make all their purchases during a once-a-week trip. If the shopping areas near you cannot be reached by public transportation, ask friends with a car if you can shop with them.

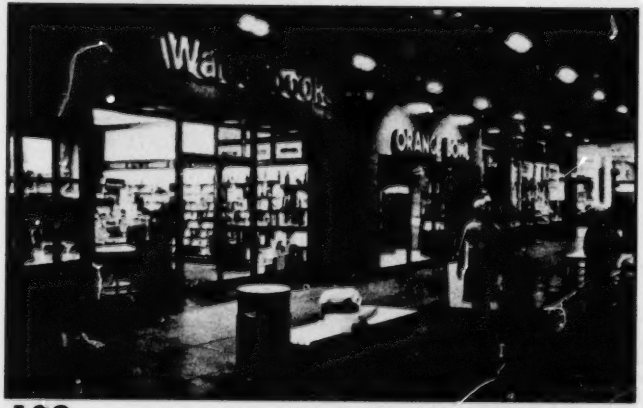
Supermarkets

These are the most common places to buy food. They also sell cleaning products, cosmetics, magazines, some clothing items, some household items, and some "over-the-counter" drugs.

Farmers' markets

In some areas of the U.S., farmers come into town on certain days of the week to sell fresh fruit, vegetables and flowers. Bargaining may be permitted in some farmers' markets.





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"Ethnic" grocery stores

If you cannot find the food you want in supermarkets, ask a friend if there is an Oriental, Spanish, or other ethnic grocery store nearby. Most big cities in the U.S. have stores that sell foods familiar to you. The prices are usually higher than supermarket prices.

Department stores

These are mostly large chain stores that sell clothing, furniture, appliances, hardware, shoes, and some food items.

Shopping centers and malls

In some areas, department stores, supermarkets, and smaller specialty shops are frequently located in a huge building called a mall or shopping center. It may also include restaurants, theaters, skating rinks or bowling alleys. Spending a day at a mall or shopping center will give you a good idea of what things are available in the U.S. It will also help you learn the names and prices of unfamiliar products.

Discount stores

Shopping in discount stores can save you a substantial amount of money. These stores keep their prices lower by having no credit, fewer clerks, and less elegant interiors.

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Thrift stores

Americans do not feel embarassed about buying used clothing and furniture in thrift stores. They usually are run by charitable and religious groups.

Classified ads

People who want to sell things often put a classified ad in the newspaper. The ad might say "Bedroom furniture, good shape, very cheap. Owner moving, must sell! Call 555-6677 after 5 pm." If you see an ad that interests you, ask your sponsor or a bilingual friend to make arrangements. Items listed in the want ads often sell quickly.

Repair shops

Having repairs made on almost anything is expensive in the U.S. For major repairs such as on a car or house, ask your sponsor or friends where they have received good service in the past.

Other

Other ways of shopping in the U.S. are by mail order, from door-to-door salesmen, and through telephone sales. Because of communication problems, it is best to avoid shopping through these methods.

AT THE STORE

When you enter a store, you may be asked to "check" the bags and parcels you are carrying. A clerk will take care of your belongings in the front of the store. You can pick them up when you leave. Why are you asked to do this? Shoplifting (stealing) is a serious crime in the U.S. Many people try to hide items in their bags or purses without paying for them. Even eating a grape in a grocery store is considered shoplifting if you have not paid for it. Do not put anything into your purse or pocket even if you intend to pay for it. Most stores have detectives and television cameras watching you as you shop. Also, smoking is not allowed in most stores. Put out your lighted cigarette before entering a store.

What Is Credit?

Credit is "buying now and paying later." However, when you pay later, the price is much higher than if you had paid cash earlier. This is because credit companies add an extra charge to what you owe for the purchase. Since credit can cause big problems if used carelessly, seek the advice of your sponsor and friends before applying for it.

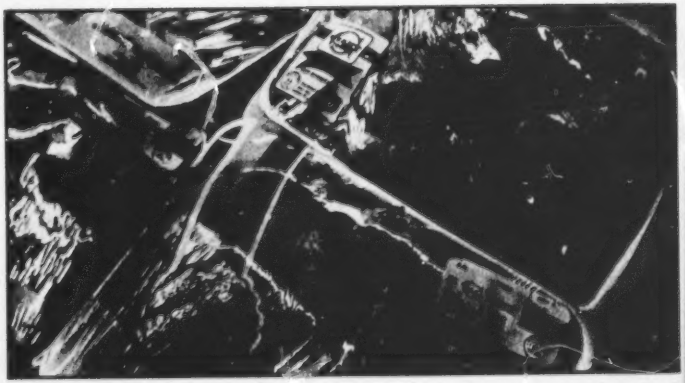
SHOPPING FOR FOOD

The food that Americans eat may seem strange and undesirable at first. Do not despair—sponsors and friends can help you find food you like. The American diet emphasizes protein (meat, cheese, milk, eggs) and may use less fish, rice, and fresh vegetables than you are used to. The frozen and canned vegetables in the supermarket taste different, but they are practical and economical. Fresh fish and other seafood will be hard to find and quite expensive in areas of the U.S. far from the ocean.

Packages

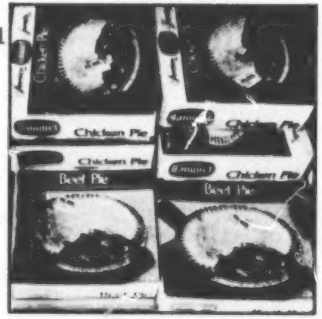
Are you puzzled by the variety of packages on the shelves? Some may have pictures on the outside that identify the contents. However, the pictures may also be "trademarks" or an advertisement that is unrelated to the contents. If you are confused about package contents, ask your sponsor or a friend to identify them for you. Items in supermarkets are usually grouped by categories—for example, all the meats will be together.

American food stores often package meat and produce to help keep it fresh. Be careful in selecting packaged items, since they may vary in cost from unpackaged. Usually cut-up chicken is more expensive than whole chicken. DO NOT OPEN PRE-WRAPPED FOOD ITEMS. If you have a question about an item, ask a store clerk.



Labels

Information on package labels can help you to know if you are getting good value for your money. A label will list the ingredients of the product. On perishable items, like milk, there will be an "expiration date" (Exp. Jan 10). It is the last day the food should be bought. If there is any date on the label you do not understand, ask your sponsor or a friend.



Food in the U.S. is measured in both the English and metric systems. It is often cheaper to buy large amounts. A ten-pound bag of sugar will probably cost less per pound than a five-pound bag.

Convenience foods

Busy people buy these because they cook quickly. But they are costly. Anything that says "instant," "ready-to-eat" or "heat and serve" is a convenience food.

Storing food

When you come home from the supermarket, store your food properly. If you find any spoiled or rotten food among the items you bought you can return it. Save your receipts. Meat, eggs, dairy products, and fresh produce must be refrigerated. Canned goods, rice, flour, sugar, oil, and jars of spices can be put in cupboards or on shelves. Once you have opened a bottle or a can, store what is left over in the refrigerator.

SHOPPING FOR CLOTHING

In the U.S., you can find clothing suitable for any climate and activity. By observing people around you and asking your sponsors and friends, you can be appropriately dressed.

Winter wear

In parts of the country where the climate becomes cold in the winter, you will need a heavy coat, sweaters, long-sleeved shirts, a hat, gloves, warm socks, and boots. Boots are important because their bottoms make walking on ice and snow easier and safer. Clothes made of wool, corduroy, and flannel are excellent for warmth.

Buying clothes

You can find serviceable, reasonably priced clothing in department stores and discount stores. (Custom-made clothing is rare in the U.S., except for the very wealthy.) In the store, you will find racks and shelves of coats, dresses, pants, shirts, underwear, and socks arranged according to size. If you do not know your size, a clerk can advise you. Or you can select a few pieces of clothing that look like they might fit. Tell the clerk you want to "try them on." The clerk will show you to a fitting room. There you will have the privacy to put on the clothing and see how it fits.

Caring for clothes

Labels sewn inside the clothing will tell you how to take care of it. Some fabrics have to be "dry cleaned" (cleaned by a professional). Blue jeans and cotton clothing may shrink when washed in hot water, and the colors may fade. Altering or repairing clothing is quite expensive when done by a professional. Try to do it yourself or find a friend with a sewing machine who can help.

Returning merchandise

If you buy something that is defective or the wrong size, or that you do not want, return it to the store. Take it to the "Customer Service" desk and explain the problem. You must take the item back within seven to ten days. It must be unused, and you must have the sales slip or receipt. The store may give a cash refund, replace the item, or tell you to select something else with an equal value.

MISCELLANEOUS

Eyeglasses

You can buy glasses in large department stores or in "vision centers" located in shopping centers or malls. These glasses will be less expensive than those purchased from a private optometrist. You can also purchase nonprescription sunglasses in these stores.

Should you tip?

Tipping customs vary, depending on where you are. The following workers expect a tip: cab drivers, waiters and waitresses, hairdressers and barbers, porters, and delivery people. A basic tip is 15%. Do not tip bus drivers, mail carriers, store clerks, or airline personnel. Never tip a policeman or any government worker. This is considered bribery and is against the law.

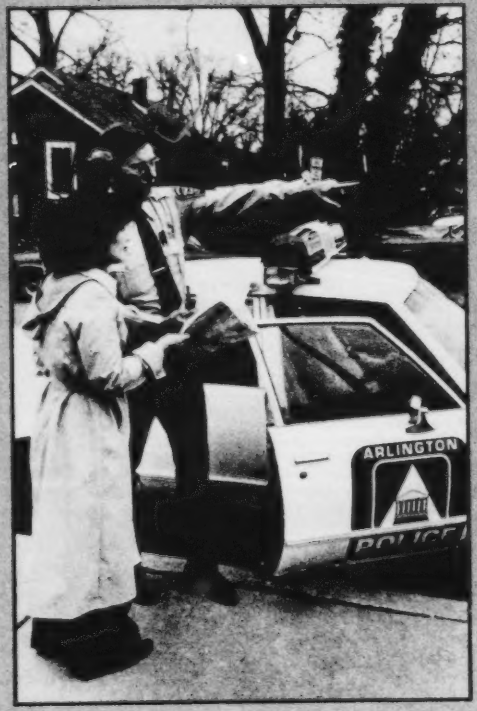
CONSUMER PROTECTION

Consumers who are cheated or treated unfairly by a business are protected by various agencies. When the clerk, the manager of the store, and the manufacturer have all failed to respond to your complaints, call one of the numbers listed in the phone book under "Better Business Bureau," "Consumer Affairs," or "Consumer Protection." They will look into your problem and give you a report. It is best to ask your sponsors or friends to help you when complicated problems arise.

CHECKLIST

- ☐ Determine what regular expenses you can expect: rent, utilities, food, clothing, etc.
- ☐ Make a budget.
- ☐ How to protect yourself against theft and fraud.
- ☐ Basic American shopping practices.
- ☐ Different kinds of stores, Salvation Army, yard sales, etc.
- ☐ Where to shop for food, including Asian food stores.
- ☐ Comparison shopping and making a selection, using sales, etc.
- ☐ How to return merchandise that is defective.
- ☐ How to shop for clothing, select the right size, dressing appropriately for current weather conditions, etc.
- ☐ Weights, sizes and measures used in America.

LAW
IN THE UNITED STATES



IN THIS SECTION:

Law in the United States 201
Refugee Status and Citizenship 202
Freedom under Law 203
Some Laws You Should Know About 205
Family Laws 207
Police in the U.S. 208
Legal Assistance 209

BACKGROUND NOTES

The opportunity for freedom is what brought refugees to the United States in the first place, so legal issues are very important to them. They may be uncertain or frightened about their legal status. In fact, many refugees have been exploited by unscrupulous Americans through threats of being deported. The refugees may be afraid of the police because of experiences in their own country.

Many refugees are surprised to find that while America is a free society, it is also a very regulated one. While the refugees enjoy the basic freedoms shared by all Americans, there are still many national, state and local laws they must learn and follow.

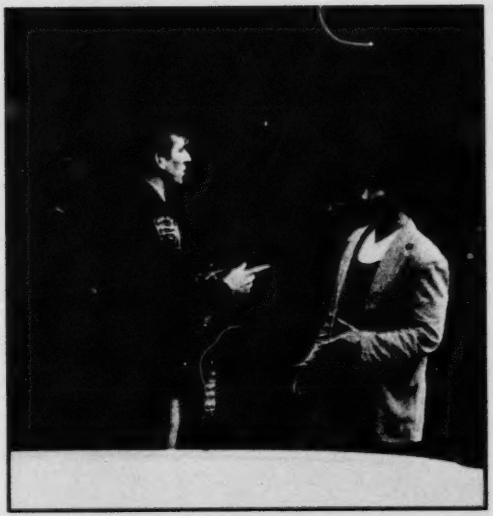
Many legal concepts that Americans take for granted are unfamiliar or even shocking to some refugees. For example, laws against child or spouse abuse are seen as a horrible intervention into private family life. It will take time for the refugee to become familiar and comfortable with the basic legal principles and procedures that all of us live with.

Refugee Status. Encourage the refugee to carry an identification or immigration card (I-94). (p. 202)

Some Laws You Should Know About. As you spend time with the refugee, it can help to demonstrate laws that affect everyday life, including traffic regulations, shoplifting prohibitions, shopping, etc. Much of what the refugee learns about appropriate behavior in this country will be based on observations of you and your family. (pp. 205-206)

THE STORY OF MR. M

Mr. M was a young, single man who had been in the United States for only a short time when he found himself in trouble. He was picnicking with friends in a city park when he saw a flock of pigeons. He decided to trap the pigeons to keep at home.



Soon a police officer approached Mr. M and asked him what he was doing. At first Mr. M wanted to run away; he realized that he had done something wrong and was very frightened. Because he did not know much English, he could not explain to the police officer why he was trapping the pigeons.

The police officer asked to see Mr. M's I-94 card. When Mr. M produced the card, it showed the name of his sponsoring voluntary agency, and the police officer thought that the agency might be able to provide a translator. Upon calling the agency, however, the police officer found out that he had to call several different people in order to locate an interpreter in town. After several tries, he finally found someone who agreed to help translate.

Through the interpreter, the police officer was surprised to learn that it was acceptable in Mr. M's native country to catch and keep wild birds, and he explained that it was illegal to capture any birds or animals in the city. Once he understood, Mr. M promised that he would not continue this activity, so the police officer decided not to issue him a ticket or impose a fine. Instead he recommended that Mr. M go to the nearest sports shop to inquire about getting a fishing license, in case he was interested in going to the areas where fishing is allowed. Mr. M was happy to find out how helpful the police in the United States can be.

LAW IN THE UNITED STATES

The United States is a large and diverse country, with many freedoms granted to its people. Therefore, strict enforcement of the laws is essential to maintain social order and to protect the rights of everyone within the borders.

In the U.S., laws are intended to PROTECT YOUR RIGHTS. Every person, no matter how prestigious, is subject to trial and prosecution if he violates the law. It is important, therefore, that you have a basic knowledge of your legal rights and responsibilities, as well as the main points of American law.

REFUGEE STATUS AND CITIZENSHIP

As a refugee, you are entitled to many of the same basic rights and fair treatment under the law as everyone else living in the United States. Here are some things you should know about your status in the U.S.

- When you entered this country, you entered with REFUGEE status. You were given an I-94 form. You must keep this with you at all times. (Make several copies for everyday use, and keep the original in a safe place.) If your I-94 form is incorrect, contact your local Immigration and Naturalization Service office to make any changes.
- Every January, all non-citizens must report their addresses to the U.S. Attorney General. A form is available free of charge at your post office or INS office. A guardian must file for children under 14 years of age.
- Every non-citizen of the U.S. must file a change of address form (AR-11) with the nearest INS office within 10 days of moving. (This form is also free of charge.)
- After you have lived here for one year, you may apply to change your status to that of PERMANENT RESIDENT ALIEN. You must do this before you can apply for citizenship (naturalization).
- After you have lived here for five years, including six months in the state in which you apply, you may apply for citizenship (naturalization). To do this, you must have a certain proficiency in English, know about U.S. history and government, and be of "good moral character."
- Your legal status affects your right to petition for your close relatives to join you in the U.S. Contact your voluntary agency for further information.
- Men must register for the draft if they are 18 years or older and living in the U.S.

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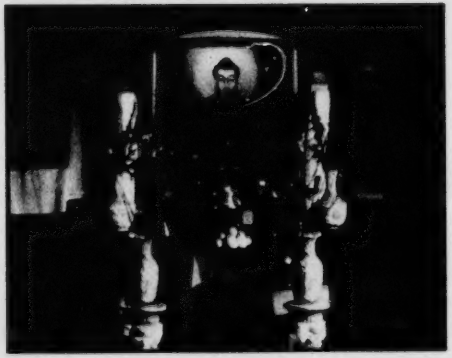


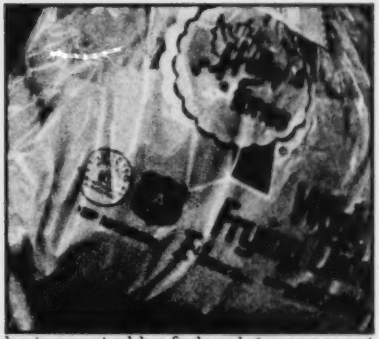
FREEDOM UNDER LAW

In the United States, national laws are made by Congress. Laws are intended to PROTECT YOUR RIGHTS. As refugees living in the United States, you are entitled to many of the basic rights of citizens of the U.S. The U.S. Constitution lists the basic rights of people in the U.S. They are

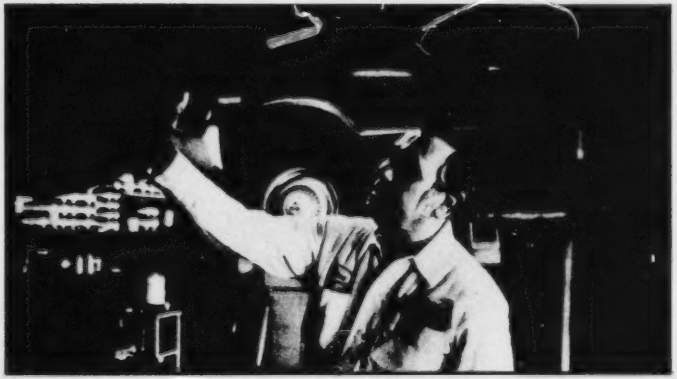
- freedom of speech
- freedom of press
- freedom of religion
- freedom of assembly

Laws are made to protect these rights. A person who violates a law might be fined, imprisoned, or both. A conviction can have other damaging effects on a person's life. For example, many employment application forms ask, "Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offense, other than minor traffic offenses, in the United States?" Employers may be reluctant to hire someone with a conviction record. Ignorance or claiming you didn't know about a certain law does not exempt you from it.

There are three kinds of laws in the U.S.: federal, state, and local.



Meat must be inspected by federal government



Federal Laws

Federal laws apply to every person living in this country. For example, concerning employment, federal law prohibits discrimination in hiring or firing based on your race, color, sex, national origin, or religion.

State Laws

State laws apply within a particular state. These laws vary from one state to another. For example, in some states, the law requires car inspection once or twice a year, but in others it is required only when the car is bought or sold. Driving age also varies from state to state. In some states, you can get a driver's license at age 16; in others you must be 18. Many states set the age to drink alcoholic beverages at 18; in others the age may be 21.

Local Laws

Local laws apply in a particular city or county. For example, in some rural areas it may be legal to raise goats, sheep, pigs, or chickens, but in most cities it is against the law to do this.

Laws in the United States may seem strange or complicated to a newcomer. If you are not sure whether something is legal ask your sponsor or a friend to help you find out. In the U.S. ignorance of the law does not make you exempt from it.

SOME LAWS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

- Shoplifting is considered a very serious crime in the U.S. If you take anything out of a shop or store, or from one section of the store to another, without paying for it, you will be considered to be shoplifting and you may go to jail.
- You must have a license to drive a car in the U.S. Driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol is illegal. In some places you may lose your license if you are caught with an open bottle of alcohol in your car.
- Child abuse and spouse abuse are illegal in many parts of the U.S. What is considered to be mistreatment in the U.S. may be acceptable in other countries. For example, leaving a baby or child alone in a home or in a car is sometimes considered child abuse.
- Permits are required if you want to hunt or fish. Slaughtering animals in the house, especially in urban areas, is illegal unless you have a permit. Usually you cannot trap or kill pigeons, geese, ducks, or squirrels on public property.
- Picking fruit or flowers from other people's yards or public parks may be illegal.
- Littering is illegal in most places. For example, if you are caught littering on certain roads or highways in the U.S., you may be fined $50 to $200.

- Carrying firearms, certain kinds of knives, or other dangerous weapons without a permit, is illegal in many places. The laws are very strict about this in some places, and you could be sentenced to at least a year in jail if you are found guilty.
- Prostitution is illegal. Both the prostitute and the customer can be arrested.
- You might not be able to go into a store or a restaurant unless you are properly dressed. Shoes and shirts are required in most public places.
- Urinating in public — out of doors — is against the law. You must use a restroom.
- Exchanging money in card games or other games, even at home, may be against the law. This can be viewed as gambling, which is illegal in most places.

These are common signs for restrooms. The symbols on the left denote men's restrooms; those on the right are for women.

- Giving false information on public forms is illegal. You should not give a false birth date, name, or name of family members to officials.

FAMILY LAWS

Marriage, divorce, and adoption are legal matters in the United States.

- Before marriage, you must register with the local government and get a license. You may be required to have blood tests and to present your refugee or Permanent Resident Alien documentation.
- There are laws which govern the age of marriage. In many states teenagers cannot marry without parental consent.
- Legally, a person can only have one spouse at a time.
- Divorce can be complicated in this country. Consult a friend or sponsor who can direct you to appropriate legal services.
- Parents are usually considered to be responsible for their children's behavior.

POLICE IN THE U.S.

In the United States, police enforce the law. They are responsible for many things, from directing traffic to apprehending criminals. If there is a traffic accident or a burglary, police are called to the scene. They will help you with directions if you become lost. Police sometimes respond to medical emergencies; they know how to administer emergency medical care. Here are some things about the police you should remember.

- In the U.S., police are here to help and protect you.
- Police must not be bribed. Bribery is illegal here.
- If you are stopped by the police, it is considered unlawful to run away — you could be shot for not stopping for the police.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE

If you are accused of a crime in the U.S., you are considered INNOCENT until you are proven guilty. You have the right to an attorney or lawyer who will represent you in court. If you cannot afford a private attorney, the court must provide one for you. This attorney will present your case to the court. A court-appointed lawyer is required by law to help you to the fullest extent possible. If you are subpoenaed, you must attend court. NEVER SIGN ANYTHING UNLESS YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT IT SAYS. If you have a legal problem and are not sure how to best secure the services of an attorney, contact the Legal Aid Society in your town or in a large city near you.

CHECKLIST

- ☐ Record the number of your I-94 card in case of loss and make several copies.
- ☐ Laminate or in some other way protect your I-94 card.
- ☐ Get a wallet so that you can safely keep your I-94 and other papers with you.
- ☐ Learn about your rights and responsibilities under immigration and naturalization regulations.
- ☐ Obtain state or local identification cards.
- ☐ Be acquainted with laws that affect your status.
- ☐ Be sure you understand laws regarding spouse and child abuse.
- ☐ Understand the American concept of shoplifting.
- ☐ Familiarize yourself with local laws and regulations affecting such matters as liquor purchase and consumption, family matters, hunting, fishing, etc.

National Hotlines (toll-free):

HHS Citizenship Taskforce .....(800) 424-0212
(For information on citizenship and immigration regulations)

Orientation Resource Center .....(800) 424-3701
(For materials and information regarding orientation to the US)

English Language Resource Center .....(800) 424-3750
(For materials and information regarding ESL training)

Local Names and Numbers:

Mutual Assistance Association _____

ESL Training _____

School District _____

Vocational Education Information _____

Housing Assistance _____

Medical/Dental Clinic _____

Pharmacy _____

Local VOLAG _____

Church or Temple _____

Legal Assistance _____

Sponsor _____

Secondhand Clothing and Furniture _____

Ethnic Markets _____

Grocery Store or Supermarket _____

Interpreter or Bilingual Friend _____

Others _____

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Keep this information close to your telephone so it will be readily available if needed:

Your name _____

Your address _____

Your telephone number _____

Sponsor _____

Local VOLAG _____

Police _____

Fire Department _____

Doctor _____

Ambulance _____

Hospital _____

Poison Control Center _____

Emergency Number (usually 911; if not:) _____

Mutual Assistance Association _____

Special Indochinese Hotline (if any) _____

Others _____

_____

_____

_____

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PART IV

CHECKLISTS

The following checklists are designed to help you plan and coordinate your work with refugees. They are intended to be comprehensive; many items may not apply to your location or circumstances, however. Using these checklists will enable you to remind yourself of necessary preparation and services to be provided as well as help you organize the time you devote to the refugees.

Prior to the Refugee's Arrival:

- ____Obtain and read background information on the Indochinese, including their cultures and languages
- ____Obtain a basic phrasebook or dictionary to use when an interpreter is not available
- ____Identify persons who can serve as interpreters
- ____Compile a list of resources including:
    - ____The voluntary agency or resettlement office
    - ____Available social services and public assistance offices
    - ____English-as-a-Second-Language programs
    - ____Employment and training programs and centers
    - ____Housing possibilities, both temporary and long-term
    - ____Sources for inexpensive furniture and clothing
    - ____Medical care:
        - ____Doctor
        - ____Dentist
        - ____Public health services
        - ____Clinics, special programs and projects
        - ____Mental health counseling and referral services
    - ____Services for children and youth
        - ____Schools
        - ____Child care
        - ____Youth training programs
    - ____Stores selling Asian foods
    - ____Legal Assistance
    - ____Cultural or community centers and associations
    - ____Emergency services
        - ____Police
        - ____Fire
        - ____Medical
        - ____Interpreters and translators
        - ____Hotlines serving refugees (national, state, local)
    - ____Religious groups, temples, etc.
    - ____Arrange for temporary emergency housing in case the refugees arrive unexpectedly on short notice
    - ____Arrange to have some food on hand when the refugees arrive
    - ____Collect some basic furnishings, kitchen utensils and linens
    - ____Collect some basic furnishings, kitchens utensils and linens
    - ____Arrange for initial transportation needs
        - ____A person to donate time and use of car to transport the refugees to initial appointments and visits
        - ____Public transportation
        - ____Emergency transportation
    - ____Arrange for an interpreter to accompany you to the airport

Upon the Refugees' Arrival:

____Bring clothes and shoes to the airport in case the refugees arrive without sufficient clothing

____A quiet, friendly greeting is usually best since the refugees may have been in transit for days and will probably be tired and a bit anxious and confused. Be aware of cultural differences in the forms of greetings that could cause misunderstanding

____Do not overwhelm the refugees with questions or information. Proceed slowly and make sure they understand what is going on.

____Make sure the refugees have the large plastic bags containing X-rays and other important documents. These should be considered confidential and the information contained in them should not be released to anyone other than those immediately concerned with the resettlement of the refugees.

____Take the refugees to your home or where they will be staying. Depending on the time of day, they may want to rest or have something to eat

____At the refugees' quarters:

- ____Show them the different rooms and furnishings and explain their use
- ____Show them how to make and use the beds
- ____Demonstrate the use of light switches
- ____Show how to open and close doors and windows
- ____Show how to use the toilet, sink, shower, tub, etc.
- ____Show how to use the refrigerator, stove and other kitchen appliances
- ____Show how to dispose of garbage
- ____Explain and demonstrate the use of any other appliances or furnishings the refugees may need to use the first day or night

____If the refugees are not staying with you initially, it is sometimes recommended that someone stay with them the first couple of days to insure that the refugees are safe and to deal with any initial fears or anxieties

____Be sure the refugees have enough time to rest and recover from their journey

During the first week after the refugees' arrival:

- ____Apply for a social security card for each refugee
- ____Take the refugees for a complete physical examination, eye exam and dental checkup
- ____Apply for medicaid, food stamps and other public assistance as needed
- ____Show how to use a telephone to contact someone in an emergency
- ____Show how to use household appliances
- ____Show how to use public transportation to get to stores, social service offices, etc.
- ____Orient the refugees to the different types of stores and how to make purchases
- ____Explain financial matters and expenses the refugees will have to cover such as rent, utilities, food, clothing, etc.
- ____Contact the resettlement agency or local employment office to arrange for some assessment of job skills and employment possibilities
- ____Arrange appropriate English instruction
- ____Obtain local or state identification cards
- ____Laminate or in some other way protect the I-94 cards to prevent damage
- ____Record the I-94 numbers so they will be easier to replace if lost
- ____Enroll school-age children in school
- ____Enroll the refugees in a local orientation program if one is available

During the first month the refugees may need your help to master the following areas:

____Household operation
- ____Appliances
- ____Garbage disposal
- ____Furnishings
- ____Cleanliness in the home and outside

____Food
- ____Shopping
- ____Food care and preparation (washing, refrigeration, cooking, etc.)
- ____Foods used in the U.S.A.

____Clothing
- ____Appropriate dress in the U.S.A.
- ____Picking out the right size of clothing
- ____Seasonal clothing: coats, gloves, hats, etc.
- ____Care and use of clothing
- ____Laundromats, washers, dryers, where clothes can be hung, etc.
- ____The need to wear shoes

____Safety
- ____Emergency assistance, such as dialing 911
- ____Proper use of appliances
- ____Use of locks on doors and windows
- ____Traffic safety
- ____Proper use of medications
- ____Proper use of household cleaners and liquids

____Transportation and Communication
- ____Using the telephone, long distance charges
- ____The post office and how to mail letters
- ____Knowing one's own address and telephone number
- ____Public transportation
- ____Emergency transportation
- ____Cars and driving: laws, need for insurance, getting a license, etc.

____Health and Medical Care
- ____Personal hygiene
- ____Emergency Care
- ____Immunizations
- ____Seeking medical help
- ____Doctors, dentists, hospitals, American medical practices
- ____Familiarity with blood tests and drawing blood
- ____Need to keep doctor's appointments
- ____How to obtain insurance
- ____Basic principles of nutrition
- ____Medicaid or other assistance
- ____Availability of family planning services

- ____Child Care
  - ____Approaches to child care in the United States and generally accepted practices
  - ____School enrollment
  - ____Forms of discipline used in the United States
- ____Money
  - ____Values of coins and currency
  - ____How to budget
  - ____Banks and how to obtain bank accounts
  - ____Precautions such as not carrying large sums of money
  - ____Credit, its uses and abuses
- ____Stores and Shopping
  - ____Shopping practices
  - ____Different types of stores
  - ____Returning merchandise
  - ____Comparison shopping and making a selection
- ____Cultural Differences
  - ____How to get along with American neighbors
  - ____Proper dress and behavior by American standards
  - ____Meaning of "yes" and "no"
  - ____Laws about liquor, child and spouse abuse, shoplifting, local ordinances and regulations.
  - ____Roles of family members in the United States
  - ____Time, punctuality, keeping appointments
- ____Legal Status
  - ____Understanding of immigration and naturalization regulations and responsibilities
  - ____Understanding of permanent residence and citizenship requirements
- ____Steps Toward Finding Employment
  - ____Locating employment centers
  - ____Locating job programs and training
  - ____How to look for a job
  - ____Preparing a resume
  - ____Interviewing for employment, practicing interviews
  - ____Obtaining personal counseling regarding employment experience and possible related jobs in the U.S.A.
  - ____Explanation of role of employment in U.S.A., job mobility, "working your way up," two weeks' notice and other American job practices
  - ____Income tax rules and regulations
  - ____Health and accident insurance and other fringe benefits
  - ____Social security regulations and benefits
  - ____Appropriate dress and behavior on the job
  - ____Employer-employee relationships
  - ____Steps toward keeping a job

DIRECTORY

You and your sponsor can use the form on the next two pages to list important local telephone numbers.